
HOME
SUNDAY
LIBRARY

I found him seated on a little straw in a corner of the room.

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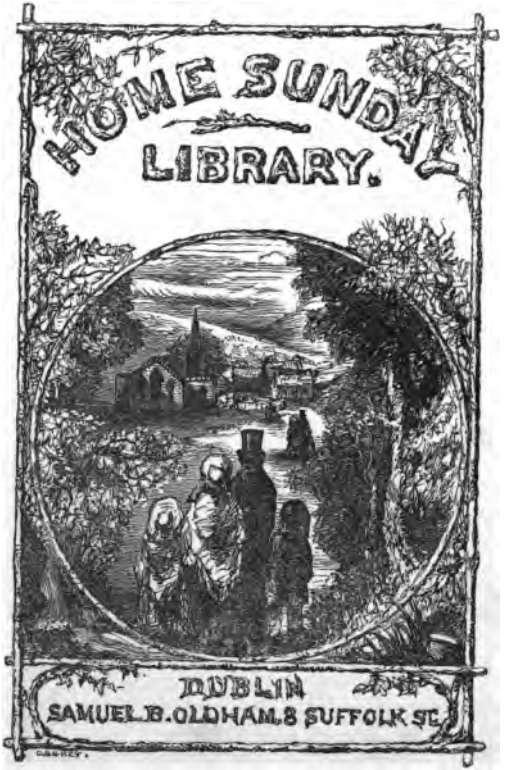
HOME SUNDAY
LIBRARY.
DUBLIN
SAMUEL B. OLDHAM, 8 SUFFOLK ST.

HOME

SUNDAY LIBRARY.

A SERIES OF STORIES.

BY

THE AUTHORS OF

"THE VALLEY OF THE CLUSONE," "THE VOICE OF THE NEW YEAR," &c.

First Series.

DUBLIN:

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THE WIDOW OF NAIN.

"I WISH mamma would send for some more Sunday-books," said Richard to his brothers and sisters, as he sat listlessly turning over a number of those nice little books which are published by the Religious Tract Society. "I wish mamma would send for some more; for I have read all these so often, that I am quite tired of them."

"I am sorry," said Mrs. Morgan, who had just then entered the room, and heard his remark, "you are so tired of those books, as I am afraid it will be a long time before I shall have an opportunity of getting others; but suppose, in the mean while, you were all to try and supply the want, by each writing, during the week, some short story in the style

of those little books, by which means your Sunday-library would be replenished, and much pleasure would be derived from feeling that you were employing yourselves for the gratification of each other. I shall willingly contribute my share."

"But, Mamma, we never should be able to do it. We should not know what to say."

"You do not know what you can do till you make the attempt. Various incidents which are daily occurring, and the instruction to be derived from them, will, if you pay attention to what is passing around you, furnish ample materials for such narratives. It is not absolutely necessary that what you write should be even as long as one of those half-penny books; as, till you acquire the habit, you may find it difficult to express yourselves otherwise than very briefly. Or you might endeavour to compose a short hymn, or a set of questions on some of the historical parts of the Bible; or say what lesson you think may be learned

from any particular incident detailed in Scripture."

The conversation was here interrupted, and nothing more was said on the subject till the following Sabbath; when after dinner, Mrs. Morgan said, "Well my children, have you prepared any little stories, or tried to write any verses on Scriptural subjects?"

"No, Mamma; for there would have been no use in our trying, because we are sure we could not write anything."

"I am sorry you have not acted on my suggestion; but I have not been unmindful of my promise; and as example is universally allowed to have more weight than precept, I hope you will take encouragement by mine, and that I shall have the satisfaction of finding next Sunday that you have at least made the attempt."

"I hope we shall, dear Mamma, especially as you have been so kind as to give yourself the trouble to set us the example."

Mrs. Morgan then read the following verses for her young folks.

The Widow of Nain.

WHAT is that wailing sound I hear,
As, issuing from the city-gate,
Mourners bring forth a lowly bier,
With solemn looks, and steps sedate?

And who is she, that stricken thing,
With pallid cheek and faded form,
With look of grief so harrowing,
And heart so utterly forlorn?

A flow'r of every flow'ret shorn,
A dove of loving mate bereft,
A tree by ev'ry tempest torn,
Till not a single leaf is left.

See where in silent woe she stands,
A widow—childless—all, all gone;
With streaming eyes, and clasped hands,
Beside the body of her son.

To stay her tears in vain she tries,
That she once more may fondly trace,
Ere hid for ever from her eyes,
The lineaments of that dear face.

But who is He who marks her grief,
Compassion beaming in his eye;
And hastes, unasked, to give relief,
With all a brother's sympathy?

THE WIDOW OF NAIN.

'Tis One who hath both will and pow'r
(Of Him she surely had heard tell,)
To aid her in this trying hour—
Jesus, the Christ, Emmanuel!

He bids the mother dry her eyes;
Desires the weeping mourners stand;
Says to the dead, "Young man arise,"
Return to life at my command.

Oh speak again that wond'rous word,
Give, oh! give, some sign—some token;
But hush! the dead that voice hath heard—
The slumberer's chain is broken.

He breathes, he moves, sits up, and fain
Would speak his grateful praise;
"Mother, receive thy child again,"
Is all the lowly Saviour says.

And now with acclamations loud
The people rend both earth and sky;
How little deem'd that wond'ring crowd,
They view'd Incarnate Deity!

Ah! had they known in that their day;
But, no, alas! they knew him not:
So fail'd his precepts to obey,
And all his benefits forgot.

But we, as Prophet, Priest and King,
(Both God and man) our Saviour own;
And know that by his offering
He did for all our sins atone.

But while we thus acknowledge him,
  If we his gracious precepts slight,
Far heavier is our load of sin
  Than that of ancient Israelite.

Then, oh! my Saviour, still display
  Thy quickening power, and grace;
And unto Ireland's people say—
  "Awake to life, ye slumb'ring race."

The afternoon of the Sabbath following that on which Mrs. Morgan had received a promise from her children, that they would endeavour to form a Home Sunday-library, proved so exceedingly wet, that the family, instead of going, as usual, to evening service, had prayers at home. After they were concluded, and the servants had heen dismissed, Mrs. Morgan left the room; but shortly returned with a card-board basket in her hand, round which were painted, in ornamental letters, the words, "For voluntary contributions to the Home Sunday-library."

"Here, Anne," said Mrs. Morgan, addressing a little girl of about seven years old, "as

you are too young to be a contributor yourself, it shall be your business to collect the offerings of others."

"Oh! yes, Mamma, that shall be my part. I can do that. Please, Mamma, put yours in first."

Anne then went round to all her brothers and sisters, and Mrs. Morgan had the pleasure of seeing each of them deposit a little manuscript in the basket; for expecting their mamma would call on them, each had their paper at hand.

"I think," said Mr. Morgan, putting down his book, "as Anne is collector to this new Society, I must be reader; so, come children, draw your chairs round the table, and I will enter on my new office."

It was Christmas week, and the children had coaxed their elder brother, who had come home for the vacation, to prepare a contribution also.

The paper which he dropped into the basket,

as Anne presented it to him, was the first Mr. Morgan took up. It was as follows :—

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

December 25th, 1851.

How oft these words, as friendship's token,
This morn have been already spoken;
But ah! how few have rightly weigh'd
The greeting which their words convey'd.
"A merry Christmas"—yes to those
Who on the Saviour's love repose;
And know the blessings which his birth
Brings to the fallen sons of earth—
Of ev'ry clime, and ev'ry nation
Who trust him with their souls' salvation.

And happiness, the coming year,
To whom? To those alone who hear
His voice, and while they hear obey,
And walk in wisdom's pleasant way.
So, should their work on earth be done,
Ere that brief space its course has run;
'Twill be the happiest year which yet
They ever knew. Their sun will set
To rise upon that day so bright,
Of which the Lamb himself's the light.

"Thank you, Frederick; those lines are very appropriate for the season, and I like your reflections on a greeting uttered, in

"We will all, ma'am, help Jane to gather up the corn
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general, as most salutations are, without the slightest degree of thought. But what comes next? A story, I perceive, by Ellen, entitled 'The Gleaners?'"

THE GLEANERS.

As Catherine and Jane Ramsay were putting on their sun-bonnets one evening, to go and work in their flower-garden with their brothers, they were told that Miss Rogers, with her brothers and sisters, was at the door requesting to see them. They immediately hastened down, and found their brothers already at the door, inviting their little visitors in.

After the usual greeting, Jacob, the eldest of the party, said, "Thank you, we cannot go in, for we are going to glean in papa's large corn field. We thought as it is such a fine evening, you would like to come also, for glean-

ing is very pleasant work, and we shall be glad of your help, as we always carry what we glean every year, to poor Dame Wiggins, who is so weak that she cannot go out gleaning for herself; and then she is so grateful, poor old woman, that when she bakes her first batch of bread, of the flour made of the corn we gather for her, she always makes a tiny loaf, which she brings us, as she says, for a thank-offering; because it is owing to us, that she has any wheaten bread to eat; and I don't know how it is, but we always think that little loaf nicer than any other bread."

"Oh! thank you for coming to ask us. We shall like to go with you so very much; but we must first ask leave. But will you not come in."

"No, it would only delay us, and we do not wish to lose any time, so please to run and ask your mamma at once."

Mamma's permission was soon obtained, and she said she would go herself to meet them,

after she had finished writing her letters, as she thought by that time they would be on their way home. The happy party soon reached the field, which was a very large one.

The yellow corn was bound up in sheaves, which were thickly spread on the ground, as God had blessed man with an abundant harvest, and numerous ears of corn lay scattered in all directions; for Mr. Rogers was a kind-hearted man; and thankful to the Giver of all good, who had crowned his fields with plenty, he showed his gratitude by obeying the spirit of his injunctions—"And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest; thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God." Lev. xxiii. 22. "When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for

the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow, that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands." Deut. xxiv. 19. And he would not allow his labourers to rake his fields after the sickle, but left a liberal supply for the poor gleaner, who has no fields of his own.

"Now," said Jacob, "we must be industrious; for as papa often remarks when he gives us anything to do, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.'"

The children separated, and strayed hither and thither; and though the yellow potentilla, the bright scarlet pimpernel, the blue forget-me-not, the rosy daisy, and even wild pansies, which were found in many parts of the field, were so far irresistible, as to cause an occasional interruption in their labours; yet they attended so well to steady Jacob's exhortation, that when he called to them to draw towards the gate, as the declining sun gave warning that it was time to return home, it appeared

that all, excepting Jane, had gleaned almost as large a bundle as its collector could carry. Now Jane happened to be the youngest, so when the children compared their bundles; it was not so very strange that hers should be the smallest; but Jane on perceiving it, grew very red, and looked very vexed, and asked in a sharp tone of voice, "How is it that you have all gathered so much more than I have? I am sure I have worked so hard, that I am quite hot and tired."

"Perhaps," said one of her brothers, smiling, "you have the smallest bundle of corn, because you have the largest bunch of flowers."

At this remark, Jane, already out of humour, became quite angry, and said, "I dare say, Thomas, the reason you have such a quantity is, that you pulled some out of the sheaves.

"Oh! fie, Jane; how can you say such a thing? That would be robbing Mr. Rogers."

Jacob, who was a very kind boy, now said, "Well, never mind who has the most. I dare

say we all picked up as much as we could. Let us take it at once to Dame Wiggins. How glad she will be to see what a quantity we have got!"

"I am sure," exclaimed Jane, "I'll not be the one to give her the least; I won't carry her any at all." And as she said so, the angry child threw down what she had gleaned, tossed it about, and burst into tears. At this moment their mamma made her appearance at the gate of the field, and seeing the children, whom she had expected to find so happy, standing with such sorrowful looks over the scattered corn, and Jane sobbing, she, of course, demanded an explanation of the strange scene. This, Jacob gave, detailing the circumstances faithfully, but evidently with a desire not to increase the displeasure which he knew Mrs. Ramsay must feel at her daughter's behaviour, and concluded by saying, "We will all, ma'am, help Jane to gather up the corn, so that none of it shall be lost."

"Jane," said Mrs. Ramsay, turning towards her little girl, and looking much concerned, "by giving way to your hasty, unsubdued temper, you have made yourself miserable, you have disturbed the happiness of others, you have set a bad example; and worse than all, you have shown yourself unmindful of God's all-seeing eye, which is ever watching you, and marked the pride which led you to be angry, because you found that others had done better than yourself."

Jane, though a passionate, was not a stubborn child. She felt the truth of her mamma's observations, and how very wrong she had acted. She immediately acknowledged her fault, and begged her mamma and her young companions to forgive her. This they readily did, her mamma remarking, "You must not omit, my child, to ask forgiveness at the throne of grace, and to seek earnestly to obtain from your Heavenly Father, that meek and quiet spirit, which is in his sight of great price; and

then you will learn, when you see others doing better than yourself, to obey the precept, 'Consider one another to provoke unto love, and to good works.'" Heb. x. 24.

As Mr. Morgan concluded, he cast a look full of affection upon Ellen, and a tear stood in her mother's eye, for well they both remembered the fact she had recounted, and well had their child profited by her mother's advice; for who would have supposed that the gentle girl now before them, was once the passionate child, whose conduct she had so faithfully narrated.

NANNIE'S
FIRST SABBATH IN THE COUNTRY.

"WHAT can you do of a Sunday in this dull place," said a little girl, who, on account of a severe calamity having occurred in her family, had been invited by Mrs. Seymour to pass some days at Woodlands.

"Why," replied one of her youthful companions, "do you call it dull; we are never dull. Besides, why should we be duller of a Sunday than on any other day?"

"Oh, because—because," said Nannie; and she stopped, and seemed either unable or unwilling to assign a reason for her assertion; "after one has been to Church, and learned the Collect for the day, and read a while in

the Bible, or some other Sunday book,* one has nothing to do but to sit and look out of the window; and here there is nothing to look at but trees and the lake."

Now, Mary who did not half like to hear the sweet spot on which she first opened her eyes, spoken of in such a disparaging way, said with some warmth, "Oh! surely, Nannie, you do not think it nicer to look at people walking backwards and forwards, than to look out at this pleasant prospect; on the lawn, and the lake, and the wood; and to see the sheep, and the cows, and the trees on the hill side, reflected so clearly in the water, which looks so smooth and shining; and the swan swimming so proudly about. Why it was at this very window, and at this very hour, that Aunt Anne wrote those lines, 'The Sunset Hour,' which I shewed you yesterday in my album. She wrote them in my album, and not in Eliza's, because it was from the window of my room

* It is to be feared, that many, like Nannie, look upon the Bible as only a Sunday book.

she saw so much of what she described. You know Eliza's room is at the pine end of the house, and looks into the pleasure-ground, where are the flowers that she loves so well, and takes so much trouble with; and she has a way in which she sometimes takes a peep at my prospect, too, when sitting at work in her own room. Can you guess how it is?"

"No, I cannot; as it is the furthest from the front, at the end of the house, I do not think she could well stretch out her head far enough, to see what lies to the front of the house."

"No, that would be rather dangerous. I knew you would not be able to guess. I was greatly puzzled also, when she first told me she could do so. I see I must tell you; for you will never find it out. Well, you know ours are cottage windows, and all open outwards; so she hangs a looking glass which she has, in a frame, on the half of the window which opens to the left; and when it is open, she sees reflected in it, a great deal of the

prospect which lies to the right; and very, very pretty it looks, only a great deal smaller than it really is. But as to finding Sunday a dull day, indeed we do not; and I dare say you will not find to-morrow so either. We are always so happy of a Sunday.

The family at Woodlands always breakfasted half an hour earlier of a Sunday, than on other days, in order to give the servants time to get ready by the proper hour for Church.

The children passed some time with their papa before breakfast, repeating the verses they were to say at the Sunday School, and proving the Collect for the day. After prayers and the morning repast were concluded, they all got ready to walk with their papa to the Church, which was at some distance, as the good Rector always catechised the young folks of his parish, for an hour before the morning service began.

As they left the hall door, the dog rose up from the large mat on which he was lying in

the porch; and after fawning on them, and receiving his usual share of caresses, accompanied them down the steps, and a short way down the avenue, as if to see them off. He then stopped, and stood wagging his tail, and looking wistfully after them.

"Look, Nannie, at poor Mell," said one of the little boys; "he knows it is Sunday; for though on other days he always comes to walk with us, he never of a Sunday comes further than a few steps." Nannie called, "Mell, Mell;" but he paid no attention to the summons, but after watching the party for a little longer, walked slowly back towards the house.

It was a lovely morning, every thing looked bright and smiling. The birds were singing; the flowers smelled sweetly; the lambs were frisking by the side of their mothers, or, after standing still for a few moments gazing at one another, they would all start off, as if they had agreed to run a race; away they went, bounding on and on, till, as if by mutual

consent, they all came to a stop, turned round, and ran back again.

The path from Woodlands to the Church lay through the fields; the high road had many years before passed that way, and remains of the banks and hedges which had marked its course, were still visible.

The younger children of the party were a little in advance of their papa, and of their elder brothers and sisters; and were pointing out to Nannie the pretty wild flowers which grew on one of these sunny banks, when they were startled by a boy suddenly darting up from behind it, and running behind a little thicket of hawthorn bushes which stood near. Mr. Seymour had seen him also, and walking quietly up to the spot, found a child crouching down, trying to hide from observation. He immediately recognised him, as the son of a small farmer, who had lately come to reside in the neighbourhood. Mr. Seymour had more than once called at the house of his parents, to

say he should be glad to see their child at the Sunday School; and though they had always treated him with civility, and thanked him for inviting the child, and had even promised to send him, yet they had never done so, nor had he ever seen either him or his parents in Church.

"What are you doing there, child," said Mr. Seymour.

"Nothing," replied the boy in a surly tone.

"Nothing! but you ought to be doing something, for this is the Lord's day; and though a day of rest from worldly work and care, should not be spent in idleness; but you should go to Catechism, and to Church, and to Sunday School, and not spend it playing about the fields, as I think you felt, when you ran away on seeing me, and endeavoured to hide yourself; for the wicked fleeth when no man pursueth, but the righteous is bold as a lion."

The boy looked very sulky, and seemed as

if still inclined to run away; for he glanced first one way, and then another, as if calculating the possibility of escape. But Mr. Seymour continued in a kind tone, "Come, come, my lad, though you have not begun the day well, that is no reason why you should not end it so; will you come with us?"

The boy raised his eyes, and looking first at Mr. Seymour, and then at the group of happy, nice-looking children, he appeared suddenly to change both his mind and his manner, and said in a firm voice, "I will, sir."

"That is right," said Mr. Seymour, patting him on the shoulder. "Come, and I think I can promise you a pleasanter, as well as a better spent day, than you would have roaming about the fields. Can you read?"

"Yes sir; for I always went to a day-school before we came here."

They reached the Church a few minutes before Catechism began. Mr. Seymour shewed John (for that was the boy's name) where he

was to sit; it was in a pew near that occupied by the Woodlands' family; so that he had him in full view; he also asked a good little boy, who sat in the same pew, and on whose steadiness he knew he could depend, to bring him to the Sunday School after Church.

John felt so pleased at the notice taken of him, that he willingly accompanied him to the School.

Mr. Seymour found on examining John, though he could read very well indeed for his age, yet that he was sadly ignorant respecting the simplest truths of religion. He knew that there was one God, and repeated the names of Father, Son and Holy Ghost; but of God as Creator, of Jesus as Redeemer, and of the Holy Ghost as Sanctifier, he knew nothing. He appeared neither to feel nor think that he was a sinner—constantly doing that which he should not do, and leaving undone that which he should do; nor ever to have had it pointed out to him, that God is holy, and therefore

hates sin; that he is true, and has said he will punish sin; and that he is just, and therefore must punish it; nor to have been told of the wonderful way in which God, notwithstanding his holiness, truth, and justice, can yet forgive the poor sinner, who goes to him for pardon through Jesus Christ. "For that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that all who believe in him, should not perish, but should have everlasting life."

The boy listened attentively, while his kind teacher explained these things; and when Mr. Seymour dismissed the school, he told John that he hoped he would soon (if he continued attentive and regular in his attendance) be able to advance him to a higher class than the one to which he had been obliged to appoint him.

Mr. and Mrs Seymour and the children returned home by the same pleasant path through the fields. They found dinner, (which, with the exception of the vegetables, was always a cold one of a Sunday) quite ready.

When it was over, and the servant had withdrawn, after first placing on the table, a nice dessert of fruit, which had been gathered the evening before, Mr. Seymour called his youngest little boy to him, and giving him the key of the garden, told him he might tap at the kitchen door, and give it to the servants (who had dined while the family were at the Sunday School) as they might go into the garden, and eat some fruit; "but tell them, I wish them to keep at the left hand side of the centre walk."

This was a message little William always liked to be sent with; or, in winter time, to carry them a little basket of apples, which his mamma was sure to leave ready on the side board.

The children having finished their fruit, they all went to the drawing room, when Mrs. Seymour gave to her elder children a slip of paper, on which was written the following question—"What became of the golden calves which Jeroboam made?" and another to the

younger children, on which was written—"Did the Apostle Paul live to be an old man?"

She then left them to themselves, till it was again time to set out for Church.

On their way thither, the children told their mamma the answers to her questions, naming the chapter and verse where they were to be found; these furnished subjects for conversation during their walk.

As Mr. Seymour walked up the aisle, he was greatly pleased to see not only John in the place he had occupied at morning service, but his mother seated beside him. Mr. Seymour gave him an approving nod, as he passed the pew.

After the refreshment of the evening meal, to which a barn-brack had been added in honour of their youthful visitor, Mr. Seymour and the elder children each took a book suited to engage their attention on the Sabbath day; and the younger members of the family, drawing a little table to a distant part of the room, where their mamma had already seated herself

on a sofa, said, "Nannie will you join us, and help to catechise mamma?"

Nannie looked surprised, when they explained themselves, by saying, "Mamma is our scholar of a Sunday evening. "Do come; mamma is generally very good, and says her lesson well."

Nannie consented; they then seated themselves, and opening their Bibles, asked their mamma questions on various parts of Scripture such as—"When God sent, by his prophet Gad, to give David his choice as to which of the three judgments he named, should come upon him, what answer did David make?" 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. "Who stayed up Moses' hands, when Amalek fought with Israel?" Ex. xvii. 12. "What were the two signs which Gideon asked of God?" Judges vi. 36–40. "How was wicked Ahab killed?" 2 Chron. xviii. 33. "What king had his eyes put out?" 2 Kings xxiv. 7.

As the children had assured Nannie, mamma

was very good, and was answering very correctly, when the bell rang for evening prayers; and Nannie was quite sorry to find it was so near bed time. "Ah!" thought she, as she laid her head on her pillow, "how mistaken I was—how much pleasanter Sunday passes in the country than in the town."

Poor little Nannie, she had yet to learn that the difference lay not in the place, but in the manner of spending the Sabbath.

"I know, Mamma," said Richard, looking very wise, "from what you took several parts of your story."

"Doubtless you do, my dear," replied Mrs. Morgan, smiling;" and that is a corroboration of the justness of the remark which I made, when I proposed this plan—that if you would take notice of what is passing around you, you would not find it so very difficult, as you seemed to think, to procure materials for your little stories."

The Sunset Hour.

The labourer's daily task is done;
Still warmly glows the setting sun;
The corn is waving o'er the lea,
The fruit hangs ripen'ng on the tree,
The streamlet murmurs forth its song,
Winding mid grassy banks along;
Brightly now glows every flow'r,
Whether in garden, mead, or bow'r;
So bright each tint, so pure each scent,
As if each little flow'ret meant
Its mingled beauties should arise
An evening off'ring to the skies.
With arched neck, and look sedate,
The dove is cooing to his mate;
The hare has left her close retreat,
Allured by scent of clover sweet;
The fish are sporting in the lake—
How bright the eddies which they make;
The swan, with snow-white panoply,
Seems empress of that mimic sea;
The bird is singing on the spray,
Or winging high its airy way;
The butterfly, in giddy maze,
Is culling sweets it ne'er repays;
The bee, with self important buzz,
Seems telling us how much he does;
The shepherd, in some shady nook,
Has thrown aside his bill and crook;
Reposing after toil and heat,
His dog lies crouching at his feet;

His sheep are browsing on the hill,
Or wand'ring up and down at will.
The cow has yielded up her store,
And seeks the verdant field once more;
Released from plough, and bit, and rein,
The horse is rolling on the plain;
The donkey, through the day opprest,
Allow'd, at last, to be at rest,
Stands in brown study 'neath a tree,
Contented as an ass can be.
The shaggy goat, escaped from thrall,
Is peering o'er the garden wall;
The farmer, sitting at his door,
Views well pleased the prospect o'er,
His infant, at its mother's breast,
Is gently sinking to its rest.
Whistling aloud some carol gay,
The woodman homeward wends his way;
His children, running, haste to see
Who first shall clasp his father's knee,
Together reach the sturdy man,
And laugh as children only can.
Oh! selfish he who cannot say,
"I love this hour of holy-day,"
Nor feel his heart with praise o'erflow
To Him who hath ordain'd it so.

SELF-CONFIDENCE.

A LADY was seated one day in an arm-chair, by the side of a bright fire, watching an elderly woman, who, with much care and tenderness, was dressing a little baby of only a few days old. As the nurse (for such she was) finished the task in which she had been engaged, she gazed for a few moments on the infant, as it lay on her knee, with an expression of much satisfaction, arising from a mingled feeling of self-complacency, at the neat and dexterous manner in which she had accomplished her difficult duty, and of admiration of the tender being who had been the object of it. She then arose, and placed it in its mother's arms, exclaiming, "Ah! madam, how could any one injure such a dear, helpless little creature as this? I am sure I never could have the heart to do so."

The lady, as she received the child from the old woman, shook her head, printed a kiss on its tiny brow, and for a short time seemed totally occupied in contemplating its little form. And in truth it was a lovely thing to look upon, as it lay just sinking into a placid slumber, in its long white wrapper; the neatly crimped border of its night-cap lying so close round its soft, fair face, and its hands folded across its breast.

But awaking from her reverie, the lady said, "So, nurse, you think you could not find it in your heart to hurt this child; and yet you know, there have been many, and even mothers too, who have murdered children."

"Ah! ma'am, I have often wondered, when I have heard or read of such things, how they could do it. I am sure the hearts of such people must be wonderfully wicked."

"Wonderfully wicked indeed, nurse; and yet not more wicked than yours and mine."

"Oh! madam, how can you say so? Surely you do not think that either you or I could find it in our hearts to do such a thing?"

"It is not what we think about our hearts, or about those of others, but what God, who cannot be mistaken, tells us in his Word concerning them, which should guide our opinion. Murder is enumerated in the list he has given us of those things which proceed out of the heart, (Mark vii. 21, 22.) And lest, in our pride, we should suppose that ours are not the hearts intended, he tells us in the thirty-third Psalm, that our hearts are fashioned alike; and again, in Proverbs xxvii. 19, 'As in water, face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.' Thus, when we hear of the crimes which others commit, instead of thinking we could never be induced to do such things, rather let us consider them as so many warnings to examine closely that evil fountain within us, whence flow all these bitter fruits; remembering the admonition —'Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall!'"

"But, ma'am, some people are much more wickedly inclined than others."

"All have not the same temptations openly to violate God's laws. Some are restrained by education and custom, some by fear of punishment, and not a few by the desire of standing well in the opinion of their fellow-creatures. I for instance, am surrounded by every blessing which competence can bestow. I know no want —I have no temptation to steal; but did I feel the pinching hunger which is depicted in the face of yon poor shivering creature, who is at this moment crossing the street, should I be honest? Dare I boldly say I should? No, I dare not; for do I not know from the text I have just quoted, that my heart is like that of other people; and is not theft, as well as murder, mentioned as proceeding out of the heart? Then let me say, 'Unless, Lord, thy grace restrained me, I should steal.'"

"Well really, ma'am, I do not think you would ever steal; for though I am but a poor body compared to you, I am certain that I could never do such a disgraceful thing. I feel I would rather starve first."

"Nurse, do you ever wish for what does not belong to you?"

"Why, ma'am, as for that, I cannot say."

"And yet where, in the sight of the Searcher of hearts, is the difference? Do you remember the account Achan gave of the progress of his crime?—'I saw a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them.' (Joshua vii. 21.) We first desire, and then we take. The same Being that said, 'Thou shalt not steal,' said also, 'Thou shalt not covet.' If we indulge in covetousness, let us be sure we are as guilty in his sight, as if we actually appropriated what we covet; and that it is not the fear of displeasing him that restrains our hands, (as we shew by giving way to covetous feelings;) but some other motive—the fear of disgrace or punishment."

"But after all, ma'am, to steal is not as bad as to kill; for there are many people who, though they steal, would certainly not kill."

"Man," replied the lady, "in his estimation of sin, is apt to judge of its enormity by the amount of injury the committal of it inflicts on his fellow-creature, and not by the affront which he thereby offers to God. But what says the Scripture?—'He that offendeth in one point, is guilty of all.' As to imagining that there are many who steal, who would not commit murder, and that you and I could never be guilty of either—such a supposition would prove us very forgetful of the awful warnings contained in God's Word, as well as very ignorant of the natural depravity of our own hearts."

Whether the old woman's conscience bore secret testimony to the truth of the lady's observations, and that she, like all others who have a high opinion of the goodness of their own hearts, did not like to have her self-complacency disturbed, it would be difficult to say, but most probably this was the case; as when the conversation reached this point, she drew herself up—her colour became considerably higher than usual,

and she said, in an offended tone of voice, "Really, madam, I am sorry you have such a bad opinion of me; I certainly never expected to be likened to Achan."

"To this half angry speech the lady mildly replied, "Do not misunderstand me, nurse; I did not intend to say any thing to hurt your feelings. I only wished to prove to you, from the Bible, the universal depravity of the human heart; and when I particularized yours and mine, I did so, because it is always wise to bring these things home to ourselves; but please to lay this little slumberer in her cot, and then reach me my Bible, and I will turn to some passages which may serve further to instruct us in this matter."

The nurse did as she was desired; and after having comfortably settled the infant in its bed, she handed the lady her book; and seating herself on a low chair near her, she took up her knitting, and signified her readiness to listen.

The lady then read the history of Hazael,

remarking, as she did so, on the indignation he expressed, when first told of the crimes which he would eventually perpetrate. "So little," continued she, "did he suppose himself capable of such treachery and cruelty, that he seems to have shuddered at the bare mention of them, and exclaimed, 'But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?' (2 Kings viii. 13.) And yet the sad sequel proved the truth of what God by his prophet had revealed. All Scripture," continued the lady, "is profitable for instruction." And does not what I have just read, instruct us never to confide in our uprightness of intention, or in our own ability to resist temptation?"

"But, ma'am, was not Hazael a heathen? and a heathen, you know, could not be expected to be as good as those who have a right religion."

"We might imagine so, were not the evil doings of those who were God's own children likewise recorded. As if foreseeing the very objection you have raised, we find St. Paul, in

Rom. iii. 9, asking the question—'Are we better than they?' and also answering it—'No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.' Look, for instance, into what awful sins David fell, when unrestrained by divine grace. Perhaps there was a time when he thought he never would have committed them. But we find him, in Psalm cxix. 117, as well as in many other places, expressing a deep sense of his dependence upon God, for power to keep in the right way. If we turn to the New Testament, we hear poor, self-confident Peter vehemently exclaiming, in answer to our Lord's intimation that he would deny him—'Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples,' (Matt. xxvi. 35.) What a comment on this verse does the latter clause of the 56th verse of this same chapter afford—'Then all the disciples forsook him and fled.' How little reliance should we place upon ourselves, or on the goodness of our hearts, when the volume of

truth furnishes us with such terrible examples of the crimes into which not only a heathen fell, but one of whom it is recorded, that he was 'the man after God's own heart;' and another, who was not only an apostle, but who also appears to have been one of his Master's most favoured companions. Rather let us acknowledge, with the Apostle Paul, that in us, that is in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing, (Rom. vii. 18.) And let us go to Christ Jesus, 'who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,' (1 Cor. i. 36,) that we may receive out of his fulness 'grace for grace,' (John i. 16;) remembering that 'he filleth the hungry with good things, while the rich he sendeth empty away,'" (Luke i. 53.)

The lady ceased speaking; and the old woman—from whose countenance all appearance of displeasure had been gradually fading, and an expression of deep thoughtfulness assuming its place—made no reply; nor did the lady press the subject further; but satisfied with having

obeyed the command—"Cast thy bread upon the waters," (Eccles. xi. 1,) she silently pleaded the promise—"My word shall not return unto me void." (Isaiah lv. 11.)

Whether nurse was convinced by what the lady said, or rather by what the Bible said, (for you see that she proved all she advanced by the Word of God,) does not appear. But I would ask you, my dear young reader, what you think of your heart? Is your opinion regulated by God's Word, or by some preconceived notions of your own? When you hear, or know, of the wicked actions of others, what are the thoughts which arise in your breast? Is it the proud feeling that you are better than they, because you have not done such things? Put far from you the dangerous supposition. Had you been circumstanced exactly as they were, how do you know but that you would have acted far worse? Remember, by harbouring such a feeling, how much you resemble the proud Pharisee, who thanked God that he was not as other men; and

remember also, our Lord's declaration, that the poor self-condemned Publican, who smote upon his breast saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," went down to his house justified rather than the other. If your heart were good, you would never do what is wrong; for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. I do not want you to say you think or feel what you really do not; but I want you to watch your own heart; and you will soon perceive how exactly true what God tells you about it is.

Scripture is full of declarations of the necessity for a change of heart, and of promises to those who seek it. Go, then, at once to Him who is as willing as he is able to give what you ask. Ask in faith, nothing doubting, and rest not satisfied till you get an answer to your prayers. The man who asked for loaves, of whom we read in the parable, (Luke xi. 5,) did not go away till he got them. If you want your parents to give you any thing, how you watch for a fitting opportunity to prefer your

request; and if they promise to comply with your wishes, but delay to do so, how careful you are to remind them of it on every convenient occasion. Our Lord says, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." If you were hungry and thirsty, nothing would satisfy you but food and drink. Vessels full of gold and silver, precious jewels, fine dresses, would not do so; you would willingly relinquish them all, for the nourishment you required. So it is with the soul that has been brought by God to hunger and thirst after righteousness: nothing can satisfy it, but being made holy. Go, then, in prayer to your Father who seeth in secret, and your Father who seeth in secret will reward you openly. Not only openly, when before men and angels he will acknowledge you as his child; but even openly now, in this present life.

Are you a passionate child? Go ask your Heavenly Father to enable you to subdue the first risings of your evil temper. Are you in the habit of telling untruths? Ask for grace to

watch the door of your lips—entreat of him to impress on your mind that awful denunciation, "All liars shall have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." Are you dishonest? are you disobedient? are you idle? Go with each and every sin to your Father which heareth in secret, and he will reward you openly, by giving you grace so to overcome your sins, that all will remark the change, and will say—"How that child is altered: he who used to be so passionate, or so deceitful, or so dishonest, or so disobedient, or so idle—is now so gentle, so true, so honest, so obedient, so diligent, that he is quite like a new creature.

When a poor person comes to us too frequently for assistance, we are apt to say to them—"I relieved you very lately; why have you come so soon again? how can you expect me to help you so often? you are troublesome—you presume on my kindness. But it is not thus with God; for he giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; and so far from telling us that we ask too often, or

too much, he says, on the contrary, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." But you must not suppose, that heaven is to be the reward of your holiness. No; eternal life is the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. vi. 23.)

When the leper—who was a striking type of the sinner—was cleansed, he was to offer a gift, as a testimony or proof that he was cleansed. Not in order to obtain a cure; but as a proof of his having obtained it. So it is with the poor sinner who has gone to Jesus to be cleansed from all his sin; being delivered from its punishment, he is also delivered from its power. The love of God constrains him to serve God in newness of life, and to offer him a sincere, although, alas! —owing to the flesh lusting against the spirit—an imperfect obedience.

Pray, then, my dear young friend, for this faith, which, while it enables its possessor to believe to the saving of his soul, also purifies the heart, (Acts xv. 9,) and enables him to live as becomes the redeemed of the Lord.

JESUS, the leper by a touch restored,
  Altho' half doubting he a cure had sought;
And bade him take an off'ring to the Lord,
  In proof of what his love for him had wrought.

'Tis even thus with the sin-stricken soul,
  Whom trembling faith to Jesus' feet has brought:
"Lord, if thou wilt, 'tis thou canst make me whole,
  For thou a pardon for my sin has bought."

Had the poor leper tried himself to cure,
  He ne'er had found deliverance from his pain;
And endless wrath the sinner must endure,
  Who hopes by works a pardon to obtain.

With thankful haste, when he a cure had gain'd,
  The leper went to offer to the Lord;
The pardon'd soul, by love of Christ constrain'd,
  Walks in obedience to his holy Word.

He feels his sins thro' Jesus' blood forgiv'n,
  He owns the Spirit, moulding him, thro' grace,
For the inheritance laid up in heav'n,
  For all who wear His robe of righteousness.

And now, in evidence that second birth
  Is no delusion of fanatic brain;
He lets his "light so shine" upon the earth,
  As glory for his Master's cause to gain.

Thus he who did electing love deny,
  And brand it as a license given to sin,
Is lured the sweetness of that love to try,
  And heaven of grace, and not of works, to win.

MARY.

HARRIET COMPTON;

OR,

BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS.

"O MAMMA," said Harriet Compton, "was it not very stingy of Mrs. Bowen, not to give you anything towards the support of poor Dame Reid, now that she is so very ill that she cannot work; and you know Mrs. Bowen has so often praised her, and said she liked so much to employ her, when she wanted any one to do charwork, as she always found her so industrious and cleanly; and that she was so trustworthy, that she would not even waste, much less defraud her of the least thing. And then for Mrs. Bowen to say she could not afford to give you even a trifle, when she had just shewn us all the beautiful toys she had bought for her little boy; and"——

It is uncertain how much longer the little girl might have gone on expressing her indignation

at Mrs. Bowen's refusal to help Dame Reid, had she not happened just at that moment to look up, and as she did so, perceive in her mamma's countenance an expression which caused her at once to stop short in her harangue.

"Harriet," said Mrs. Compton, looking her very steadily in the face, "for what purpose do you learn the Word of God?"

"That I may know his will," replied the child in a hesitating voice, and blushing very deeply.

"What was the first verse you repeated for me this morning?"

"'Judge not, that ye be not judged.'"

"You remember what our Saviour said to his disciples—'If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.' We are not called upon to pronounce on our neighbours' conduct—to their own Master all stand or fall; but we are told to judge ourselves: so instead of judging others, let us look to ourselves, and try if we cannot, by a little more exertion and self-denial, manage to assist this poor woman, even though we fail to get as many to contribute as we had hoped."

"But, Mamma, how are we to do it? You

know you said this morning, before we went to Mrs. Bowen's, that you thought we had done all we could for her."

"I did say so, my child; but I think I spoke without sufficient reflection. Come now, try and think if there be any way in which you can do any thing more for this poor creature than you have already done."

"Why really, Mamma, I don't know what I could do: all my money is gone, and without money I cannot buy any more clothes to make for her. Besides, now that I have that set of petticoats to make, my time will be so fully occupied, that what between sewing, and lessons, and the time you always wish me to pass walking, skipping, or taking exercise of some kind, I shall not have a moment's leisure."

"Well, I will try and help you," said Mrs. Compton.

"Help me to do what, Mamma?"

"To devise a plan, which, by steadily pursuing, you may—notwithstanding your numerous avocations, in the enumeration of which," added she, smiling, "you quite forgot to include talking

—be enabled to do something more for poor Dame Reid, and even before winter, buy the flannel she so much requires. You are a quick and skilful knitter; I heard your Aunt Margaret say the other day, she wanted several yards of knit edging, to trim a set of pinafores she intends making for her little girl. You know how often your papa is detained by business for ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour, or even longer, after the hour appointed for dinner; and I have remarked you generally spend that interval in looking out of the window, or in some way equally frivolous. Now suppose you were to employ it in knitting the edging your aunt requires. Those edgings are sold at threepence a yard; and I feel certain your aunt will have much pleasure in buying them from you, when she knows to what purpose the money is to be applied."

"Oh yes, Mamma, I am sure she will. I will set about it this very day. But *you*, Mamma—what can you do? for you never spend *that*, nor any other time, looking out of the window. You are always busy."

Her mamma smiled; but making no reply to

her question, told her that when she went to take a walk with her brother in the afternoon—which she always did, when the weather was sufficiently fine to allow of their going out—she might call at her aunt's, and ask whether she would be so kind as to buy the edging she wanted from her; also what patterns she would like, and how many yards long each piece was to be.

Harriet was so eager to set out on her errand, that she thought her brother unusually long eating his luncheon; and long before the hungry school-boy had finished, she appeared ready equipped for her walk, fidgetting by his side—a little basket hanging on her arm, containing samples of all the various patterns of knit edging (and they were not a few) which she could do, with his hat nicely brushed in one hand, and his gloves in the other.

"Why, Harriet, what is the matter, that you are in such a violent hurry to go out to-day."

"O George, I am going on very important business; but I will tell you all about it."

Harriet, with all her faults—and she had several—was a very truthful child. She not

only would not tell a direct falsehood, but whenever she related any occurrence, always did so fairly and fully. She therefore recounted to her brother the whole of the conversation which had passed between her mother and herself; and concluded by informing him of the nice plan of which her mother had thought, to enable her further to assist Dame Reid.

George was a good-natured boy; he therefore hastily concluded his repast, and taking his hat and gloves from his sister, went with her to her aunt's. Fortunately for Harriet, they found that lady at home, and quite willing to accede to her request. After looking at the patterns, and selecting the six she liked best, she delighted Harriet by saying, she would be glad if she would do three yards of each pattern for her, which would be sufficient to trim twelve pinafores, the number she intended making. "I did not mean to have trimmed them all," added she; "but as it will assist the poor woman, I shall trim the dozen." Then opening the drawer of her work-table, and taking out six boar's-head spools, No. 100, she presented them to her niece saying,

"This is my contribution to your undertaking; so if you are industrious, and complete your task, you will have the whole four-and-sixpence to lay out for Dame Reid."

Harriet thanked her aunt; and having carefully deposited the spools, together with the patterns, in her basket, returned home, and that very evening had the pleasure of commencing her task, as her papa did not make his appearance for several minutes after the dinner hour.

Harriet soon got so much into the habit of watching for opportunities, that she often found time to employ a few minutes in knitting, which would otherwise have been passed unprofitably. Once, just as she was going out with her mamma, an old lady met them on the steps, who wanted to speak to Mrs. Compton on business, and twice they had to wait a short time till a shower passed away; so by improving these opportunities, (for Harriet kept her knitting, that she might have it at hand, in a neat little box on the table in the drawing-room) she was surprised to find how quickly her work went on.

"Look, Mamma," said she one day, "how much I have already done."

Her mamma examined the work, to satisfy herself that it was properly done; and having expressed her approbation, added, "This is a proof, my dear Harriet, how much can be accomplished by "redeeming the time."

"I never well understood those words before, Mamma; but I think I now *feel* what they mean. There is another text, that when it was read in Church last Sunday, I thought I would ask you to explain; but I quite forgot it till this moment."

"What is it, my child?"

"'Bear ye one another's burdens.'"

"A burden," replied her mother, "is something one has to carry; it does not necessarily follow it should be a bodily weight, or burden. There are burdens which weigh far more heavily on the mind, and which are far more grievous to bear, than any bodily burden. A fretful, impatient temper is a grievous burden to its unhappy possessor. Suppose, for a moment, that a child (we will call her Louisa) on sitting down at the accustomed hour to study her lessons, finds those

which have been marked for her to learn for the next day, by the lady who comes daily to instruct her, particularly long and difficult. On making this discovery, instead of applying herself with more than usual diligence, she begins to fret, and spends the time she should employ in learning them in useless regrets at the lessons being, as she terms them, so very hard, which she declares is peculiarly disagreeable, as her elder sister had promised to take her to see a lady who has a dear little baby, whom Louisa delights to nurse and play with. It is drawing near the appointed hour; her sister opens the door and says, 'Well, Louisa, I hope you know your lessons, I shall soon be ready to go out.' On hearing this, Louisa's tears begin to flow, and she passionately sobs out—'Know them! how can I know them, when they are all so long, and this horrid grammar is so very very hard.' Her sister does not increase her distress and angry feelings, by reproaching her for her idleness and ill-humour, and conclude by saying, 'You know I told you I should be ready exactly at three o'clock, and I shall not wait for you.' But she comes in, and

sitting down by the weeping child, says in a kind voice, 'Oh come, Loo, I dare say the lessons are not so difficult as you imagine. Let me see if I cannot put you in the way of learning them better.'

"She then kindly and patiently goes over the half-learned lessons with the little girl, explaining and simplifying them, till even the *horrid grammar* loses half its difficulties.

"'Now Louisa,' says she, rising, 'I will go about a little commission mamma gave me to execute in the town, and then come back for you to go with me to see our friend, as I am sure by that time you will know these lessons thoroughly.'

"Oh! how poor Louisa's burden has been lightened. The example of love, patience, and gentleness, set by her sister, has had its due effect; it has soothed, while it made her feel ashamed of her own impatience and ill temper. She no longer frets and idles; but bringing a willing mind to her task, it is soon, and properly accomplished; and when her sister again opens the door, a different and a better child greets her, in the Louisa who now jumps up to accompany her exclaiming, 'I am quite

ready now; thanks to you, dear sister, for giving yourself the trouble to teach me my lessons.'"

"And thanks to you, too, dear Mamma," said Harriet, "for giving yourself the trouble to explain the verse so nicely to me."

"I am glad, my dear, you like my illustration. I will try and give one or two more examples, which will help you still further to understand this precept, as it is one which we should endeavour to have particularly impressed on our minds, being part of that charity which beareth all things. (1 Cor. xiii. 7.)

"A mother, for instance, who cannot afford to have a governess for her children, sits down, immediately after breakfast, to instruct them. In a short time the servant knocks at the schoolroom door; she has come to request her mistress to go to the kitchen for a few minutes. The lady feels annoyed at the interruption, as she is in the habit of rising early—far earlier than she would do, if she only consulted her own health and comfort—in order to attend to her domestic concerns; so that she may have the entire forenoon to devote to the improvement of her chil-

dren. But her servant has forgotten, or misunderstood some direction: the mother must leave her children for a few minutes, and desires them, as she is going out of the room, to remain quiet, and look over their lessons during her absence. But how does she find them employed on her return? Some are playing with the pen and ink, others jumping on the stools and chairs, and two are contending for the possession of a book, which neither, if he had it, would use; in short, not one is doing as he had been desired. Oh! what a pang does that poor mother's heart feel, as she witnesses the scene, and how much have her children added to her already heavy burden. That evening she desires to read a book a friend has lent her; but as she is sitting down to do so, she remembers that her little boys' coats require some repairs. She lays aside her book, and mends them, saying, as she finishes her task, 'Well, I have thoroughly repaired those coats, and I hope to-morrow evening I shall be able to read my book.' The next evening she again takes it up, feeling she can now do so without neglecting any duty, when the door opens, and

in comes one of her little boys, with the sleeve of his jacket sadly torn, exclaiming, 'Oh! Mamma, I did not mean to tear my coat; but as I was getting through the hedge, into the field at the end of the plantation, to see if there were any mushrooms where we found them last year, my coat caught in the brambles, and before I could get away, it was all torn.' When the child said he did not mean to tear his dress, he said what was true; but as his mother again put by her book, she felt that if her child had been influenced by right feelings, he would have said to himself—'I will go round by the gate into the field to look for the mushrooms, and not through the hedge; as if I do, I may tear my clothes, and then poor mamma, who has already so much to do, will have to mend them.'

"Let us suppose another case. A servant has a kind mistress; but she is very, very particular about the cleanliness of her house; and having heard unexpectedly that a visitor is to arrive early next morning, she desires the servant to scour the porch and steps, that the entrance to the house may look particularly nice.

They had been scoured on the usual day; and the girl, who had supposed her rough work finished, feels at the moment her servitude a burden, and the words—'I am sure the place is clean enough,' rise to her lips; she represses them with an effort, and sets about the job, but not with her usual alacrity. Just as she has completed it, the children of the family appear at the door with very dirty shoes, the foremost of the group is in the act of bounding forward on to the still wet steps, when he stops short, saying, Ah! Susan, our shoes are so dirty, we shall spoil your clean steps if we go upon them, please to bring down the scraper, and we will clean our shoes before we go up.'

"Now this consideration has chased away all remains of sullenness from Susan's breast; and as she hastens to comply with his request, she thinks—'Well, if mistress is particular, she has taught the children to be so too; for they never spoil my work, or make more dirt than they can help.'"

When Mrs. Compton ceased speaking, Harriet said—and as she said it tears came into her eyes

—"I fear, dear Mamma, I very often increase your burdens, though I am sure you often help me to bear mine; but I hope, now that you have taken such pains to make me understand this text, that I shall take more pains to do what it commands."

"I hope you will, my child; and above all remember, how our Saviour—who was ever the Fulfiller as well as the Author of the law—fulfilled this precept as none other could have done, when he bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, being wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." (Isaiah liii. 4, 5.)

Time passed quickly and happily away with Harriet, as time which is properly and fully occupied always does. Summer was drawing to a close, and so, too, was Harriet's knitting. The eighteen yards were nearly completed, when one day, as she entered the drawing-room, she found her mamma with the knitting box in her hand. "I have just," said Mrs. Compton, "been looking over your work, and I see it is nearly finished. I must now shew you what I have been about." So saying, she put into her daughter's

hand a little book, entitled, "Wild Strawberries," desiring her to read it. Harriet looked puzzled, when her mamma said, "I watched for opportunities as well as you, and found time to write that little book. A friend kindly got it printed for me; and I hope that with the profits arising from its sale, and the money you are to get for your work, we shall, by having redeemed time, be enabled to help poor Dame Reid to bear her heavy burden of poverty and sickness."

SWEET loving-kindness! come adorn my walk,
Dwell in my heart, and influence my talk;
Nor let me willing lend attentive ear
To the report of evil which I hear.
For little would the sland'rer's arts avail,
If none were found to listen to his tale.
Then let it ever be my effort still
To spread the good and to suppress the ill;
To cultivate the op'ning blossom fair;
To cheer the drooping spirit, vex'd with care;
To mitigate the soul's deep-seated grief,
Or to the suffering body bring relief;
To sooth the ruffled temper, and to share
The burdens others are constrain'd to bear.
And when by justice call'd to reprimand,
Let the remembrance, that "by grace I stand,"
Lead me to try the wand'rer back to win,
Loving the sinner, while I hate the sin.

EDWARD;

OR

THE WILD STRAWBERRIES.

One fine morning Edward and his nurse were walking down a pretty lane, when suddenly letting go her hand, the little boy ran towards one of its sunny banks, exclaiming—"Oh! nurse, look what beautiful tiny strawberries; so red and so bright."

"Do not gather them, Master Edward."

"Not gather them! Why not, nurse? I am sure they are quite ripe."

"I am sure of that too, my dear; but you know you get plenty of strawberries in the garden. Look at the cottage we see peeping out from the trees yonder. Several little children live there; but there are no strawberries, nor fruit of any kind, growing in the small patch of ground in front of it—only cabbages, and a few potatoes and turnips. Will you not leave these strawberries for them?"

Now Edward loved his nurse, though she had only had the care of him for a short time; for she had that quiet look and manner which peculiarly engage, not only the affection, but the respect of children; so—though I am not certain that Edward fully appreciated her reasons for desiring him not to gather the fruit—he said, "Well, Nurse, as you tell me not to take them, I will not."

"Thank you my dear child," said the old woman affectionately. "It is very kind of you to attend to my wishes. I will shew you," continued she, "when we return to the house, some lines which a lady, with whom I lived many years ago, wrote for her two little girls. But both she and they have long since gone to their happy home."

"And where was that, Nurse? Were they not at home when you lived with them?"

"They were in their earthly home, and a pretty home it was; but I mean by their being gone to their happy home, that they are all dead, and that their happy spirits are gone to heaven."

"Then I suppose they were very good," said Edward.

"They were good; for all their actions proved that they loved and feared God; not that they were born with better hearts than other people. Do you remember, Master Edward, the verse I made you repeat after me yesterday, about what God says the heart is?"

"Not quite; but if you will say it again, I will try to remember it."

Nurse repeated the verse two or three times, and Edward said it after her—"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9.) She then continued:—"My dear mistress had been taught by God's Holy Spirit to feel the truth of that verse, and had been led to ask him to forgive her sins for Jesus' sake, and to give her a new heart; and God did so. So she loved him, and shewed her love, by trying to do what he commands. And she lived to see her little girls doing the same."

When they reached home Edward's dinner was ready. He wanted his nurse to read the lines she had told him of, immediately; but she would not do so, and said it would not be right

of him not to go to his dinner at the proper time; but that after both he and she had dined, she would have pleasure in reading them to him. So in the afternoon she opened a little desk, which she kept in a press in the nursery, and selecting a paper from among some others which were tied up with it, she called Edward to her; and taking him on her knee, she read for him the following lines:—

Oh! gather not the strawberry wild,
But leave it for the peasant child.
You all have gardens large and fair,
Plenty of fruit, and some to spare;
While he has none, and scarcely knows
The fruit that in a garden grows:
The juicy produce of the vine;
The downy peach, and nectarine;
The luscious plums of various hue,
Yellow, and green, and red, and blue;
Melons in golden rind encased,
And in divisions nicely traced;
The raspberry with its slender cane,
And crop that comes so oft again;
And cherries, just like waxen balls,
Their branches train'd along the walls;
The gooseberry soft, and round, and ripe;
And currants, black, and red, and white,
Hanging in graceful bunches full,
So easy too, and nice to pull;

And strawberries ten times the size
Of those which charm the peasant's eyes.
These, and fully many such as these,
He never tastes, and seldom sees;
Then leave him, therefore, I beseech,
Such fruit as grows within his reach.
Oft as your dainties you receive,
Reserve a gen'rous share to give;
And when you take your walks abroad,
Bring out with you the tempting hoard,
Which, as some cabin door you pass,
Freely bestow on lad and lass.
Then mark the look of glad surprise,
That lightens up their laughing eyes,
As he his forelock pulls, and she
Bobs down with rustic courtesy.
Both to the very temples blush,
And straight into the cottage rush,
Exclaiming each—"Oh! Mother, see
The fruit that has been given me."
They now with eager haste prepare
To give to all an equal share.
"Come, wee wee Brother, Sister, come—
Look, here's for baby a soft plum;
And here's for mother a big pear,
And this for father, we'll leave there."
'Tis thus the treasure they divide,
And murmur not, nor grudge, nor chide.
Oft have I mark'd, and ponder'd o'er
How little selfishness you meet
Among the children of the poor—
Children who rarely get a treat.
Whate'er you give, they'll take a bite,
Or only smell, and taste it not,
Then hasten home with all their might,
To shew and share what they have got.

Oh! what a lesson this conveys
To children who have niggard ways,
Who tho' their wants are all supplied,
And many luxuries have beside,
Yet ever grudge their sweets to share,
Or even from abundance spare
Some little part, the poor to bless,
And render their privations less.
Then gather not the strawberry wild,
But leave it for the peasant child.

When she had finished, Edward said he liked the lines very much, and assured his nurse that he would never again gather the wild strawberries, but leave them for the poor children who have none in their gardens; and that he would be generous, and ask his mamma to give him more fruit than she usually did, that he might give it to those who have none.

"To leave the wild strawberries will be generous; because by so doing you will deny yourself the gratification of having them; but to get more fruit from your mamma than you want, in order to give to others, would not be so; for you would not then practise any self-denial. To part with what you do not want, is not being generous."

"I never thought of that before, Nurse. How came you to think of it?"

"I am very much older than you are; and old people learn to weigh their actions. But how now, little Master! why do you look so surprised?"

"Because," replied Edward, speaking very slowly, "I do not know how you can weigh your actions. When I went to town last week with mamma, the man from whom she bought the raisins put them into the scales to weigh them. But how could you put your actions into the scales? You do not mean to say you do that."

"No; that is not exactly what I mean," replied she, smiling. "Yet you are not far out; for it is to the balance of the sanctuary they must be brought."

Seeing Edward look still more puzzled, the old woman added, "But come, I must try and make you understand what I do mean. Listen: we must bring all we think, and say, and do, and compare, or weigh it, with what God tells us in his Word our thoughts, words, and actions should be."——

"Ah! Nurse, I understand you now; and I will try and begin to weigh mine. But," said he, stopping short, and looking sad, "how can I do that, when I cannot read?"

"Well, my dear child, this is an additional motive why you should take more pains than you do, to learn to read. And in the meantime you must mind and weigh them in the little pair of scales you carry in your bosom—I mean your conscience, which you know generally tells you whether you are doing right or wrong."

"Oh! how very funny, to have a little pair of scales in my bosom. Thank you, dear, dear Nurse," said the affectionate child; "I will try and use my little pair of scales."

GRAND-PAPA AND THE SAND HILLS.

"Come, dear Mamma," said a group of happy children, as they closed round the fire, on which a lump of cannel coal had been lately placed, one evening during the Christmas vacation, "do tell us some of your nice stories about things which happened when you were a child." "Oh! yes, Mamma," said little William, the youngest of the party, "please tell us that pretty story about grand-papa and the sand hills."

"I am afraid, my dear children, I have told you all my stories so often, that they will no longer interest you."

"O! dear Mamma, do not say so, we all like to hear them so much; we never grow tired of them, because they are all true. Pray do tell us the story William has asked for. Besides, Henrietta, (a young friend who had come to

spend a few days with them,) has never heard it."

"Well, I am quite ready to comply with your wishes, and will relate the occurrence you mention. But I must tell you, I had anticipated your usual demand for reminiscences of my childhood; as I always remark you number them among the indulgences you expect at this happy season; and feeling, as I said before, that the anecdotes of my youthful years had no longer the attraction of novelty, I have written a little narrative, of an event which occurred a few years after your papa and I first came to reside in this neighbourhood, long before most of you were born."

"Thank you, Mamma, thank you," replied the children. "A written story! that will be nice. "And is it all true, also?"

"All the material points are quite true; and I have even employed the very words used by the persons concerned. But I must tell you the story William named; and after that, I will read you the other.

"On that part of the eastern coast of England where I was born, large tracts of sand hills, covered with short grass, with here and there a little thicket of stunted bushes, extend from the breadth of half a mile to two miles, or in some places even more, between the cliffs in which the cultivated lands terminate, and the sea.

"Your grand-papa was one fine summer evening winding his way between these sand hills, on his return from a distant part of his parish, when suddenly he thought he heard a moan. He stopped, looked round, but could not see any one. Again he heard a moan, and another, and another. He listened attentively, and became convinced that the sound proceeded from a fellow-creature in distress. He walked to and fro; he looked on all sides, but could perceive no trace of any human being. He again stood still and listened; then cautiously advanced in the direction from which he thought the sound proceeded, till guided by his anxious ear, he arrived at a spot from which he no longer doubted that it issued. Immediately throwing off his coat,

and kneeling down, he began clearing away the sand with his hands. This was no easy matter, as the loose sand rolled down, and filled up the cavity almost as fast as he made it; but as he was now fully persuaded that some poor creature was buried beneath, he redoubled his efforts, and at length came to a number of branches and sticks, and on removing some of them, discovered underneath a lad, whom he succeeded, with much difficulty, in rescuing from his strange and perilous situation. Life seemed nearly extinct. Your grand-papa untied the poor boy's neck cloth, wiped his clammy brow, and chafed his stiffening hands; and after the lapse of some minutes, the fresh breeze which began to spring up from the sea revived him. He opened his eyes, looked wildly round, and then seeing your grand-papa, he. faintly said, 'O! Sir, there is another boy under the sand; save him, save him.' Not a moment was to be lost. Your grand-papa waited not to hear another word, but gently laying the boy (whom, when he revived, he had raised upon his arm) down on the

grass, he again applied himself to his arduous task; and after clearing away a great many more sticks, and other rubbish, he reached the other boy; but on drawing him out, it was too apparent that assistance had come too late. He was quite dead.

"At this moment, your grand-papa perceived some countrymen at a distance; calling them to him, he explained, in a few words, what had occurred, and begged their aid to remove the survivor to the nearest farm-house. This they willingly gave; and the poor boy, (who was about fifteen) was charitably received by the honest farmer, and his kind-hearted wife, who had him placed in bed, and then set about preparing some light nourishing food for him.

"The two men who had assisted in removing him, then returned with a hurdle, for the corpse of the other lad, which they conveyed to the nearest village.

"After the lapse of a few hours, the survivor was sufficiently recovered to state, that he and his companion, who were orphans, had been

placed as apprentices on board a small coasting vessel. They were treated with great cruelty by the master and crew; and had to endure so many hardships, that they resolved to run away whenever an opportunity should present itself; and the ship having come to an anchor at Bordsea Haven, they had together effected their purpose. Afraid of being discovered, they avoided going to any of the neighbouring villages; but having perceived, as they wandered about, a hollow place in the side of a sand hill, they made it sufficiently large to afford them a shelter, and lined and supported it with broken branches of trees, and with stakes which they pulled out of fences. They then threw up sand in front, so as to hide it from observation as much as possible, leaving only a small hole by which to go in and out.

"In this sort of cave, they had lived for three weeks; keeping close by day, and prowling about by night, robbing the hen-roosts belonging to the cottages bordering the cliffs. On the poultry thus sadly obtained, they had managed to exist.

They had a flint and steel, which enabled them to strike a light, and kindle a fire; they had also brought a gridiron with them, when they left the ship, on which they broiled their food, and they were actually thus engaged, when their frail tenement, suddenly giving way, they were buried beneath a mass of sand, mud, and sticks; and the lives of both must have inevitably been sacrificed, had not your grand-papa providentially passed at the time he did.

"The poor lad seemed deeply affected at the awful fate of his comrade in sin and sorrow, as well as by his own wonderful escape.

"I cannot tell what eventually became of him, as your grand-papa, owing to ill health, soon after left the country, to remove to a warmer climate; but it is to be hoped, that the kindness of those who placed him in a situation where he might earn a livelihood, was not in vain; and that he became a respectable member of society, 'doing his duty in that state of life, to which it pleased God to call him.'"

"Oh! it is a sad story, Mamma."

"It is, indeed, my dears, and should serve as a warning to us, that however uncomfortable or distasteful our situation may be, we should never venture to attempt to better it by means which are contrary to the commands of our Heavenly Father. Poor boys! It is probable they knew little or nothing of the Word of God, and were ignorant of his love, as manifested in Christ Jesus; for at the period I have been speaking of, the poor had not the precious advantages they now enjoy. Sunday Schools were unknown, and but few of their better instructed neighbours seemed to care for their souls.

"But I have promised you a tale of later years; and I will now read you the account of one who *was* a Sunday School scholar. William, hand me my little writing-case, and light my candle; for great as is the light from that bright fire, I think my old eyes will require more to read by."

William was not long in doing as he was desired, and the children were soon again all attention.

GRANDPAPA AND THE SAND HILLS.

SOME years ago, lived at "The Farm,"
A simple couple, free from harm;
Industrious, honest, sober, true,
With sons and daughters not a few.
One of their girls, Susan by name,
Soon raised in Hodge's breast a flame.
A farmer he, with well stock'd land,
And fifty guineas at command;
Of figure tall, and face not plain,
And character without a stain.
And Susan was a pretty maid,
(The darling of her family)
Neatly and modestly array'd,
And not in useless finery.
No flowing veils, and gaudy pins,
Brooches of glass, and trump'ry rings;
No flow'rs, but clean and well-kept hair
Comb'd smooth across her forehead fair;
No penny lace, nor herring bone,
Around her handkerchief was sewn;
No hose of open-work had she,
Nor down-trod shoes, as oft I see
On country girls; but on her feet
Were shoes and stockings strong and neat;
No broider'd cuffs, and black lace mitt,
But glove of wool or cotton knit;
No flounces strealing on the ground;

Nor trimmings on her clothes were found.
But ever plainly was she drest,
Like one of much good sense possest.
Of active turn, and temper sweet,
For Farmer Hodge a partner meet.
Well could she wash, and make, and mend,
And bake, and on the poultry tend;
The churn and milk-tubs to her care
Owed their appearance, bright and fair.
And then her butter—'twas so nice,
It always brought the highest price.
Nor did she, like a foolish lass,
Neglected let the Sabbath pass;
But early on the sacred day,
To catechism bent her way;
And after Church it was her rule
Always to come to Sunday School,
Her well-learned lesson to repeat:
She found the ways of wisdom sweet.
Attentive to instruction's voice,
She of the better part made choice,
And early learned to love and serve,
  Jesus her Saviour and her Lord,
Nor from that better part to swerve,
  For all that earthly joys afford.
Had Hodge search'd Ireland thro' and thro'
A fitter partner than young Sue,

He had not found to share his fate,
And bless him in the married state.
Quickly it was agreed that they
  Should call each other man and wife,
And speedily was named the day,
  To make them such as long as life.
Soon as I heard of their intent,
I straightway to the kitchen went,
And bade my cook her art display
  In puddings nice, and tarts, and pies,
With which, upon the wedding day,
  I might my rustic friends surprise.
And now has come that wish'd-for time
The brightest day of life's sunshine;
When, with her parents' sanction blest,
She wed the youth she loved the best.
But I my story must resume—
At proper hour that afternoon,
Set out on trays, with studied care,
And cover'd o'er with linen fair,
With message kind, I sent the hoard
I had prepared to grace their board.
The dame herself received the trays
With face of wonder—words of praise;
Her best of thanks she sends to me—
Then, turning to the company,
And fondly glancing at the bride,

Announces with a mother's pride,—
(Pride did I say! No I must claim
For that one look a purer name;
For by that glance she did express
Her heart's deep-seated tenderness!)—
"That 'twas to Susan Madam sent
Those dainties as a compliment."
The following morn the mother came
To thank me in her daughter's name,
(And in her own) "For she, poor thing,
Was diffident her thanks to bring:
But, Madam, begs you will accept
Her duty, and her best respect.
Indeed we very much had tried,
Things comfortable to provide
In our poor way, with much ado,
  That all might have enough at least;
But then, kind Madam, it was you
  Who set the blossom on our feast."

* * * * * * *

And here I would my story close,
But more I must in truth disclose.
Some months on swift-fledged pinions flew
Over the heads of Hodge and Sue;
And happiness was said to dwell
Beneath their roof, all went so well.

But ah! incapable to bless
  Has ever proved all earthly joy,
How soon can anguish and distress
  Its brightest, purest fruits destroy.
Susan now shortly hoped to claim
For her young self a mother's name.
The time arrived—with grateful joy
Both parents hail'd a baby boy.
Alas! how soon that joy was fled—
Their babe was number'd with the dead;
Before six months had pass'd away,
Under the sod his body lay.
His spirit, doubtless, went to heav'n,
In Adam dead—in Christ forgiv'n.
Soon after this it did appear
Long Susan could not sojourn here.
The frequent cough, the loss of sleep,
The sparkling eye, the hectic cheek;
The fading form, from day to day,
Bespoke consumption's sure decay.
Like fragile rose, she lovelier grew,
The nearer dissolution drew.
And tho' her strength was spent and gone,
Most beautiful to look upon!*

* I had often heard of the beautiful appearance of persons dying of consumption; but the above is the only instance of the kind I ever met with.

But lovelier far it was to trace
In that young heart the work of grace;
Which, rip'ning as away she past,
A halo bright around her cast.
I saw her near her dying hour—
She spoke to me of Jesus' pow'r
And willingness her soul to save,
Since he his life a ransom gave.
She said she felt "no doubt, no fear—
Her Saviour was for ever near;
That he made all her dying bed—
His arm was underneath her head.
Since he saw fit she should not stay,
She was quite ready to obey;
As he knew what was for the best,
She could in full reliance rest
Upon his love—that love untold,
Which sought and brought her to his fold."
At length, without a sigh, her breath
She gently yielded up in death;
Asleep in Jesus Christ she fell,
Her Saviour whom she loved so well.

"That is another sad story, Mamma."

"Say not so, my children, but rather assent to the truth of the remark which Susan herself

made, 'that since Jesus had given such costly proofs of his love, He surely called her so early away, because he knew, in his infinite wisdom, that it was best for her to be removed.' Besides, remember that happy as she was in her little peaceful home, she was exchanging her cottage for a palace—an earthly for a heavenly inheritance, 'incorruptible, undefiled, that passeth not away'—the smiles and society of her kindred here below, for the presence of her Saviour, and of the 'spirits of the just made perfect.'

"Instead of lamenting for Susan, rather admire the goodness of God in giving her grace, while still in the enjoyment of health and strength, to choose the narrow way which leadeth to eternal life; so that she could, in the hour of death, so triumphantly testify to the 'truth as it is in Jesus.'"

THE flow'r that blooms the earliest,
  The soonest fades away;
Young hopes they are the brightest,
  The quickest to decay.

But all hopes are not like the flow'r
  That blooms to-day—to-morrow dies;
The transient sunbeam of an hour,
  Lost amid life's realities.

No, those which spring from humble faith
  In the Redeemer's saving pow'r,
Glow brightest at th' approach of death,
  Nor leave us in our dying hour.

Then oh! while youth and health are thine,
  Seek earnestly thy Saviour's love;
So to the end thy hope shall shine,
  Not lost, but realized above.

MARY.

Love your Enemies.

He my enemy, Massa.—Page 93.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES.

"LOVE your enemies!" "What does that mean?" said a little girl named Harriet, interrupting herself, while reading the fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel to her aunt. "What is an enemy?"

"A person," said her aunt, "who treats you unkindly and unjustly, who hates you, and tries to injure you in various ways."

"I could not love such a one," Aunt.

"Why could you not," Harriet?

"Oh! it would be too hard. What! should I love a person for hating me? I love my friends, because they are kind to me; and other people whom I do not know, I do not care about; but I should *heartily* dislike any one who was ill-natured to me, and hated me."

"But, Harriet, this is our Blessed Saviour's command, "Love your enemies, bless them that

curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.'" Matt. v. 34.

"I could not do this, dear Aunt; my heart does not agree with it, and I don't believe any one was ever able to obey it."

"Well, Harriet, would you like to hear a true story?"

"Yes, dear Aunt."

"There is a part of the world, you know, called the West Indies, where sugar, and coffee, and tobacco are cultivated. The persons employed as labourers, are poor negroes; many of them having been seized by force on the coast of Africa, and brought to the West Indies, and then sold to white men to become slaves. They are able to labour so much under the hot sun, which white men could not do, that they are considered valuable property, when young and healthy. They are sometimes, however, very cruelly treated by their masters, in order that they may gain the greater profit by their labour."

"Oh! Aunt," interrupted Harriet, "is not that very wrong? Surely, they ought to be

treated even with greater kindness, when it is considered that they are far from home, and from all their own friends."

"True, Harriet," said her aunt, "and this very subject has been considered so strongly by every one who felt rightly about it, that a law was made some years ago in England, which set all the poor negroes in the Queen's dominions at liberty; but there are many slaves still in other parts of the world, who suffer very much.

"On one of the estates a poor slave became very ill, and could not work; he was threatened, and beaten to no purpose; he was too weak to make any exertion, and was at length cast out from among his fellows, to die. Here he might soon have perished, suffering as he was from the scorching heat of the sun and the fever of his body; for he was unable to procure a drop of water to quench his thirst; but another slave who happened to pass that way, saw his deplorable state, and immediately gave him all the assistance in his power. He carried him to his hut, and laid him on his own rush matrass, and washed his eyes and mouth from the insects

which had settled there; he poured milk and water down his throat, and supporting his feeble frame as gently as he could, spoke words of kindness and encouragement to him. Nor did his good offices end here, the poor sick slave's complaint was tedious, and continued to keep him suffering and helpless for a long time. His fever brought on grievous boils and sores over his body, and made him an object of disgust as well as pity; but his kind friend never deserted him, and at times when his own master's service did not require his attendance, he was at the side of the poor sufferer, watching him with the tenderness which an attached child would show to a beloved parent. A gentleman, who had taken notice of these circumstances, came up one day to the generous slave, and said "I suppose the sick man is your father or some near relation of yours?"

"No, Massa."

"Some, friend, then, whom you know a long time in your own country?"

"No, Massa."

"Well, then, some one who has laid you under

a deep obligation, and you are now gratefully repaying it."

"No, Massa."

"What, then, can he be to you, to induce you to pay him such attention?"

"He MY ENEMY, Massa! When in mine own country he take me from my parents; he sell me for slave to white men; he now come here himself sorrowful, sick. I remember the Lord Jesus say 'love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.' So I try to love him, and do good to him, and pray for him."

"Oh! what a good kind slave," exclaimed Harriet; "Aunt, do you think his enemy's heart was softened or changed by such noble conduct?"

"I think it extremely probable, my dear, but I cannot say, as the story mentions nothing further. You admit, at once, how lovely and how beautiful such conduct must appear, and how likely to effect the turning of an enemy into a grateful friend; this is indeed, overcoming evil with good, and were people in general to read the Bible, with the same desire and

effort to practise what they read, that this poor negro showed, we should soon find what a heaven it would be upon earth, thus to dwell in mutual love and forgiveness. The unhappiness of the present state of the world, is chiefly owing to the passions and evil tempers which dwell in the heart, concerning which we are told that it 'is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.' Jer. xvii. 9. Our envy, strife, malice, hatred, emulation, pride, anger; these are all opposed to God, consequently inconsistent with our happiness, and if we indulge them we can never enter into heaven. Let us attend, then, to what our Saviour says."

"But, Aunt, if my heart feels that it cannot do as our Saviour says, if I do not feel that I love or can love my enemies; if I cannot help being sometimes angry, cross and discontented; what am I to do? Ah! how hard it will be to get to heaven."

"My dear child, God has promised to give a new heart and a new spirit, for 'except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.'—John iii. 3. The old heart is only full

of evil continually, and therefore must be made new and clean. Pray to him, dear Harriet, that he may give you his Holy Spirit; that he may apply the precious blood of Christ for the washing, and purifying, and cleansing your heart from all iniquities. Pray to him that he may enable you by his Spirit, to keep his commandments, and walk in all peace, and joy, and holiness."

Harriet listened attentively to what her aunt said, and thought about it for a little while; when suddenly her brother, who was a year younger than herself, came into the room, and asked if she could now be allowed to go out and play with him, as his lessons were finished for that day. His aunt said, she might; "but, Harriet," she added, "take care that you do not forget the subject on which we have been speaking; you know how easy it is to make you angry and revengeful; and unless you keep a watch over your heart, you may lose that spirit of love which becomes the conduct of a Christian child."

"Oh! Aunt, never fear," said Harriet, "I might find it hard to love an *enemy;* but,

surely I shall never hate my own dear brother, whom I love with all my heart."

"Don't be too confident," replied her aunt; "do you see that tree, whose green branches are extended near the window; the leaves are now quite still, not one stirring; presently a gust of wind rises, they all become agitated, and if the wind is violent, the boughs themselves become affected, and move rapidly to and fro.

Thus it may be with your heart; nothing perhaps, at present, occurs to rouse passion or provoke angry feeling; you therefore, feel composed, and imagine that all is well within your heart; but wait till a moment of trial comes; will you, then, find yourself able to *bear* and *forbear* patiently? Wait before you boast."

"Of our Blessed Lord, indeed, it is said, that 'when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously;' but, remember that his nature was pure, spotless, and holy, while yours is corrupt and evil, and inclined to sin on every occasion." Harriet smiled, and seemed not to feel much what her

aunt said; but she went away, with her permission, to play with her brother George, who went with her into the garden. George was a strong and lively boy, he made himself very agreeable and useful to his sister for some time; he helped her to water some of the flowers, and to tie them up, and to dig and to transplant some young shrubs, which she was allowed to try her skill in rearing. The children were very happily engaged in these employments above an hour: at last, Harriet proposed that they should go down to the little brook that ran at the bottom of the garden, and try to catch some minnows; George willingly consented, and away they went together, having procured a small net, which George fastened round a hoop at the end of a stick, and thus contrived to entrap the little heedless fishes. After amusing themselves thus for a while, they caught one or two, which were larger and more beautiful than the rest: the sun was shining bright, and the fishes reflected the most beautiful colours from their tiny scales.

George said to his sister, "I will run now

and show these pretty creatures to our dear aunt."

"No, no!" cried his sister, "I will take them to her; I *must* have them, George."

"Indeed, you shall not, Harriet," answered her brother; "I had the trouble of catching them, and I must have the pleasure of showing them to my aunt." He had some minnows lying in his open hand; Harriet attempted to snatch them, upon which, he grasped his hand closely together, but instantly opened it again, for fear of destroying them. His sister became angry at his resistance, and the moment she saw him off his guard, she struck his hand a blow, and the fishes fell into the water, close to which the children were standing, and immediately disappeared.

The tears started into poor George's eyes; he was extremely vexed and disappointed. "You naughty girl," said he, "I will go and tell my aunt how you made me lose my fishes, because I would not give them to you."

"No, you must not tell," said the still angry Harriet; "if you do, I will throw all the rest of

your fishes into the water." Upon which, without waiting for his reply, she seized those that were lying on the grass, at the bank side, and in her hasty passion, dashed them back into their little stream.

George was now too much enraged to speak; he felt strongly inclined to strike her, and held up his hand as if to do so, but dropped it again, and turning away from her, he went rapidly towards the house. Harriet followed slowly and sorrowfully, for *now* she felt how just her aunt's warning had been, and how very trifling and absurd was the cause which led to so much passion; she now began to think of such verses as these: "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! and the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, an unruly evil which no man can tame," James iii. 5; "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger," Proverbs xv. 1.

Near the garden-gate, the children's aunt came out to meet them; she had become anxious to know how they had employed themselves during their long absence from the house. The

tearful eyes of both, and their flushed faces, told at once that something wrong had occurred: upon questioning them, they related their little tale of foolish strife and anger, and as usual, with children, each laid the blame upon the other. Their good aunt felt great pain, indeed, at seeing such a want of love between a brother and sister. "You," said she, "who ought to be so dear to one another, and so delighted to be able to *give* pleasure, instead of eagerly seizing it for *self*. How very far is this from the character of holy Christian children, who have the blessed Lord Jesus for their example, and his instructions for their guidance."

"Are you happy now, Harriet? Are you, George?" "Oh! no, Aunt," said both the children, "we are very unhappy." "Were you happy when you were playing together, and helping one another." "Oh, yes," they both cried out.

"Yes, dear children, you were; and it was less because you were amused, than because *you were dwelling in love*. Love is happiness, the absence of it makes misery; the moment you

departed from the spirit of love, and quarrelled, joy departed from you. Heaven is happy, for it is the world of *love*, and hell is miserable, because it is the world of hatred. 'God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.'" 1 John iv. 16.

"Now, my children, if you had come both of you together, to show me that which pleased you so much, I think all this evil and sorrow might have been prevented; had you each preferred the other's gratification to your own, there would have been mutual help and mutual pleasure. You, Harriet, promised much when you went out to play with your brother; what do you think now of all your good resolutions? You may perceive how vain they were, and learn not to trust to your own strength. The Word of God thus declares—'He that trusteth in his own heart, is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.'" Prov. xxviii. 26.

Harriet hung down her head in shame and confusion.

"Well, my child," said her aunt, after a pause, "perhaps you know a little more of your own

heart now, than you did when you made the boast. Do not trust it, Harriet; lean not to thine own understanding; look up to God, pray to him that he will give you grace to resist temptation, that he will give you holy love, and meekness and gentleness, that these may reign and rule in your every action, thought, and word, and that his grace may enable you not only to be kind to those who treat you well, but even to those who may in any way be your enemies.

"I have a little hymn, which, if you are truly sorry for your fault, I will permit you to learn."

"Indeed Aunt," said Harriet, "I am very sorry, and will be glad to learn any thing you please." And then her aunt was very glad to see her throw her arms about her brother's neck and kiss him, and ask his forgiveness; and then George said, he was very sorry also, and felt that he had been naughty in not obliging his sister in the manner she wished at once; when she was so desirous to take the little fishes to her aunt.

Now, this is the little hymn which Harriet got by heart.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES.

FOR A CHILD WHO HAD BEEN QUARRELLING.

I'VE been unkind to brother,
  I made his tears to start;
We ought to love each other,
  And show it from the heart.

I wish I had not striv'n,
  And lov'd my way so well;
Unlike the saints in heav'n,
  Where strife can never dwell:

Unlike the Holy Saviour,
  When midst reviling men,
So meek was his behaviour,
  He ne'er reviled again.

When wickedly they bound him,
  With insult, taunts, and blows,
And when with thorns they crown'd him
  No sinful temper rose.

But ah! with passion heated,
  How soon my heart is tried,
I think myself ill-treated,
  And yield to wrath and pride.

O Holy Saviour, pardon
  These wicked thoughts in me;
Lest sin my heart should harden,
  And drive me far from thee!

A hating, unkind spirit,
  The Lord can never love,
And such cannot inherit
  The blessed heav'n above.

Then let me seek my brother,
  His kindness to restore,
That we may love each other,
  And dwell in strife no more.

CONTENT AND DISCONTENT.

I WILL tell you a story my little child.

There was once a little boy, whose name was Charles; he had a kind papa and mamma, and nice little brothers and sisters: he lived in a comfortable house, and had plenty of good food and proper clothing; he had also pretty books to read, and pictures to amuse himself with; pictures of horses, and cows, and lions, and crocodiles, about which his mamma used to tell him nice stories. And when he was tired of listening to her, he had toys to play with, bricks to build houses with, and a cart, in which to wheel sticks and stones about, and a hoop to roll up and down the gravel walks of his papa's garden; for I should tell you that there was a beautiful garden behind the house, where he lived, where there were apples, and currants, and gooseberries, and cherries, and flowers of every colour; roses, and pinks, and lilies, and more than I could tell you: so sweet and so pretty.

Well, do not you think that this little boy was very happy to enjoy so many nice things? I'm sure you do; but you will be sorry to hear that he was *not* happy; for he was a discontented little boy, always finding fault and fretting about every thing. At times nothing would please him, though his kind mamma tried every plan to do so; she often laid down her own book or her work, to amuse him, and join in his little plays, or to tell him a story, or to take him out to walk; but the more Charles was humoured, the worse he became; till at last his poor mamma was so grieved, that she did not know what to do.

One day, a lady was visiting his mamma, and a tray of cakes and apples was brought in. Little Charles was in the room and he asked for some; his mamma gave him an apple, "I dont want apple," said Charles, "I would rather have cake;" "It is not good for you," answered his mamma, "and I will not give you any." Charles was angry and laid down the apple. "Run away, my little boy," said mamma, "and play with your hoop in the garden;" "I would rather stay here with you," said Charles.

"Very well, my dear, you may stay if you are quiet."

"I want to sit on your knee, mamma."

His mother lifted him up, and in a moment he said, "I would rather be on a chair:" again his mamma indulged him, and he was seated on a chair beside her, when presently he worked himself off the seat, and asked her for his book of pictures.

His mamma was engaged speaking to her friend at the time, and did not attend to him, upon which, he began to whine and cry, so as to annoy them both very much and to interrupt the conversation. "I wonder," said the lady, "what makes that little boy so discontented; is there any thing the matter with him?" "I think not," said his mamma, "but you may ask him, if you please." Now, the lady had a very kind voice and a pleasing manner, and Charles knew her very well, and was fond of her, and he was not like some little boys, afraid of every body, just as if he was going to receive harm from those who spoke to him. So this lady said to Charles.

"Are you sick, my dear?" "No," said the

little boy. "Are you hungry?" "No." "Are you thirsty?" "No." "Are you able to walk?" The little boy laughed in his tears, and put out his foot. "Are you able to see?" He looked up at her in wonder, "Yes to be sure," said he. "Have you any thing that you like to play with?" "Yes, plenty of things." "Then, I fear that you are a foolish, sinful little boy, who do not value any of the blessings which God has so graciously given to you.

"Now I will tell you about another little boy, whom I saw yesterday, who is only two or three years older than yourself, and who has been a cripple ever since he was born. His father and mother both died about six months ago, and this poor boy, James Turner, was left to the care of a very aged grandmother, who had scarcely the means of supporting herself. She shares, however, her scanty morsel with him, and takes all care of him that she can afford. Lately, however, another affliction happened to him; he took the small pox, and was extremely ill for some time; his grandmother being too poor to pay for proper assistance, sent him to an hospital, where, after a great deal of suffering

he recovered his health; but he lost what was most precious and valuable to him, the sight of his eyes."

Little Charles listened attentively while his mamma's friend told this story and seemed very sorry for the poor little boy.

The lady then went on with her story; "I went to see this little boy yesterday, Charles: and now remember what I said respecting him; he was *poor*, and a *cripple*, and *blind*; he had neither a kind papa nor mamma, nor clothes enough to keep him warm, nor food enough to eat, nor a soft bed to lie on. I found him seated on a little straw in a corner of the room; and what do you think I found him doing?"

"Crying, I suppose," said little Charles. "No, indeed," answered the lady, he was *singing*; singing a very pretty verse from the thirty-fourth psalm, and these were the words:—

> 'Through all the changing scenes of life,
> In trouble and in joy;
> The praises of my God shall still
> My heart and tongue employ.'

"He knew my voice, however, when I began to speak, and ceased singing. I asked him how

he did?" 'Quite well, *now*, thank you Ma'am,' he replied in a cheerful tone of voice. 'I am come to see if you want any thing, Jemmy,' I said. He smiled and turned his sightless eyes to me, 'Why,' said he, 'there are things which I *do* want, which God has been pleased to take away from me, and which you cannot restore; but, I am not angry with him, for it is He who has put it into my heart to be satisfied; and *I am satisfied.*'

"I asked him how he employed his time; he answered, 'Oh! I think many pleasant thoughts; I think of nice verses in the Bible which I learned before I got the small pox; I think over the times when our Saviour, the Lord Jesus, used to walk about the country, teaching the people and talking to them, and of blind Bartimeus, who sat by the way side begging, whose eyes he restored to sight; and when I am hungry and thirsty, I think how the Lord Jesus suffered in both these ways; and when I feel uneasy lying on my straw, for want of a more comfortable resting-place, I become contented when I think that He had not where to lay his head.'

"'But, Jemmy, do you never wish to run in

the fields and play with other boys,' I asked.

"'Yes, sometimes I do, but a thought of heaven comes in, and I become happy again, I feel that *it is not far off*, and it will not be very long before I shall get there; I love to sing the hymn:

'There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.'

My night will be ended then, and my pains will be felt no more.'

"This is the manner in which little James Turner spoke to me, though I cannot remember all that he said. I asked his grandmother afterwards, however, when we left the room, if he was generally as cheerful as he then appeared to be, she said he was; that he spoke or sung to her, pleasant, encouraging words continually; that he took every thing even the driest crust, with thankfulness, and never complained of any hardship, and that he was trying to learn little works of industry, in which he took great pleasure, that he might be able to assist her, and maintain himself. She said that she was herself teaching him to knit, but that he would prefer basket-

making if he had the means of procuring osiers.

"I asked her if he had always possessed the same contented, happy disposition that I now witnessed." She answered, that he had not, but that during his late illness, a great change had taken place in him, and she believed that he never had loved his Saviour or his Bible till then; and that ever since this love had been planted in his heart he had been happy."

Charles listened very attentively, and the lady continued, "Now, my dear little Charles, compare for a few minutes your lot with that of young James Turner, and observe the difference between you; yet he is always happy, and you seem always discontented.

"Look at your kind mamma who is so anxious to please and gratify you; look at your limbs; you can run, and walk, and go wherever you choose; and look out through your eyes and enjoy the sight of the fields, the gardens, the sky, the sunshine, and all the lovely and beautiful objects that are scattered around you; the books which you have to read, the toys and pictures which you have to amuse and instruct you. When you are hungry, there is plenty of good,

wholesome food ready provided for you, and when you are tired and sleepy, a nice warm and comfortable bed for you to repose upon, and yet *you* are fretful and unhappy, while the child that wants all these things is able to sing for joy. Now, Charles, what can be the reason of this difference?"

"I dont know," answered Charles.

"It is this," said the lady, "because you seek *your* happiness without, he finds *his* within; his heart is changed by the grace of God into an humble, patient, thankful, loving heart, he therefore enjoys every thing, even the smallest mercy, while the greatest makes no pleasant impression upon you; he makes a paradise of every place, and you remain miserable and discontented wherever you are."

"I wish I was like him," said Charles, "but what do you mean by making a *paradise?*"

"Paradise, you know, was the holy and happy place, where God caused the first man and woman, Adam and Eve to dwell, before they broke his commandment: they became *discontented,* however, and wished for something more than what they already possessed; this was the

beginning of their sin. God intended that they should have their chief delight in himself, but they turned away from him to seek it in the tree of knowledge, so he let them take their own way, and they became miserable. Now, my dear child, if you would be happy like this little boy, James Turner, you must seek your happiness in God. Though you are a sinful, naughty little boy, still if you repent *heartily and believe* in the Lord Jesus Christ, He will receive and pardon you; He has promised this himself, saying, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

"I know that text," said Charles.

"I am glad you do, for it gives you assurance better than anything I can say, that it was to bless and restore sinful souls like yours, who wander far and wide in search of happiness, without being able to find it, and who set their affections on earthly things, that he came from heaven and died upon the cross. He has also promised to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him, in order to help them to come to him, and believe in him and keep his holy laws. You know all this I am sure, my dear child."

Charles looked at his mamma and said, "Yes, I have often heard mamma speak of those things, and I can say the Scripture words you were speaking of, they are in the New Testament, in St. Luke's Gospel,—'If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.'"

"Very right, Charles," said the lady, "how happy we ought to be to have the very words of our Lord written for us, to give us comfort and direction in all we want to know. A great many people older than you, Charles, have made exactly the same mistake, seeking happiness where it was never to be found, and at the end of their lives they have discovered that they had been disquieting themselves in vain. Have you ever heard of a great king called William the Conqueror?"

"Yes, he was the first Norman king who came to England; and after killing the Saxon king, who then reigned, he took his crown and ruled in his stead. Mamma told me all about that."

"Very well, Charles, I am going to tell you something more about him, which perhaps you

do not know so well, for it is not always related in his history. He is celebrated for being a famous warrior, one kingdom did not content him, he must have two, and this by force and violence, and shedding of blood. He had not wealth enough, nor castles enough, nor subjects enough to content him; and so he spent his life still thinking to be happier and happier the more he acquired. But, learn what he thought and felt about it all when he came to die. He grew dreadfully alarmed when he found the close of life drawing near, he scarcely knew what to do; and being little in the habit of praying for himself, he called on all around him to intercede for mercy. These are some of the words he used, which I have only altered a little, to enable you to understand them better—'Being laden with many and grievous sins, O Christ, I tremble; and being ready to be taken by and by into the terrible examination of God: I am ignorant what I should do; for I have been brought up to love war and fighting, even from my childhood. I grieve to say that I have shed much blood; I can by no means number the evils which I have done for these *sixty-four* years

which I have lived in this troublesome life, and now for all this, I am constrained without hope or comfort to render an account to the JUST JUDGE.' Here was the miserable result of sixty-four years' experience, all things in which this great king had sought happiness, not only failed to give comfort at the last, but increased his sorrow and regret.

"Now, my dear little boy, we have talked enough about this at present, and perhaps your mamma will pardon you for being naughty and troublesome, and allow you to go and run with your hoop in the garden, for a little time, while the day is so fine."

Little Charles, now asked his mamma's leave in a cheerful tone and proper manner to go into the garden; and immediately she gave him leave.

When he left the room and was by himself, he thought a great deal about what the lady had said, and about the good little boy who was so happy and contented, although he was poor, and lame, and blind; and he lifted up his heart in prayer to his Blessed Saviour, that he might have grace also to become a happy child of God.

Then, the next thing he thought of, was to

ask his mamma's leave to go some day and visit the blind boy, that he might himself hear him speak and sing some of his sweet hymns. And he thought of a way in which he could be of use to him, by saving up some of the money he received now and then from his papa and mamma, to buy osiers, or other materials to assist him in his basket-making or other work, and he thought further of asking his mamma's leave to give some of his breakfast or dinner every day to the poor boy, who had so little of every comfort.

After the lady was gone, little Charles came into the sitting-room again, and told mamma all he had been thinking about; she was pleased with him and kissed him, and said that she much approved of it all; "but I'll tell you, Charles," said she, "the way I think will be best for you to share your food with him. Whenever you are inclined to eat your bread without butter, or to give up a cake or an apple that you would like to have, I will put by a penny for James Turner, and at the end of a month I will give you the money to buy clothes or food, or anything that you think will be most useful to him."

Little Charles was delighted with this plan, and jumped for joy, and kissed his mamma, and that evening he eat no butter with his bread, and during the next month he denied himself many apples and cakes, thinking of the pleasure he would have in bringing the money to Jemmy Turner. And I can assure you that he was far happier that month than he had ever been in his life-time before. And at the end of it, little Charles and his mamma, and her friend, the lady who had spoken so kindly to him, all went together to the room where the blind boy lived, and Charles had the happiness of seeing him himself, and of bringing him as much money (the fruits of his own patient self-denial) as would give him comfortable support for some weeks.

When little Charles was coming away with his mamma and her friend, after making this visit, he said, "Mamma, I think I am grown *wise* NOW! I am resolved, I am *determined* not to be discontented any more."

"Take care, Charles."

"Why do you say, 'take care,' Mamma?"

"Why? Because if you trust to your own strength you will *certainly* fail and fall. I fear,

Charles, that you have something of the same notion, that many, *many* older and wiser than you have, namely, that man can be his own saviour, and that his *resolutions* against sin, and his self-determination to do right are sufficient. This might be all true, if man were not a fallen creature, and being born in sin and full of evil desires, was not completely incapable of thinking a good thought, or doing one single action that is pleasing to God. The Bible assures us of this, and those who know anything of their own hearts *feel* that it speaks truth. But, my dear child, while we are told that we cannot help ourselves or escape from sin by any power of our own, we are also taught, that on Christ our Saviour help is laid; that he being *just*, died for us who are *unjust*, to bring us to God. By believing on him we acquire a new nature, called in the Bible 'being born again,' whereby our *hearts* and desires are changed, and instead of loving sin, we from thenceforth hate it and love God and holiness. His Holy Spirit is also promised to enable us to obey the commands of God, and thus, though weak by nature, we grow strong through his grace, to conquer all our spiritual enemies.

Tell me, Mamma, how I am in danger?
and how I can be like a fly?

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THE FOOLISH FLIES.

A SMALL tea-cup full of honey was placed in a window, where there were numerous flies sporting in the sunshine, on a fine summer's day. A little boy, named Edgar, stood watching them for some time. First one fly was attracted; he dipped his little foot in the cup, and was caught; he attempted to get free by struggling, but it only occasioned him to sink deeper, till presently his whole body was entangled in the honey. Another, and another fly followed; they alighted on the tempting honey, and in a short time they all perished. Edgar wondered why they should follow one another so foolishly: "see, Mamma." said he, "how little sense these poor flies have; the very sight of the first one, unable to get loose after he had dipped his foot in the honey, ought to have kept the rest away; yet, now you may see the whole cup quite black with dead flies."

"Very true, Edgar," said his mamma, "if

these flies had sense, there is little doubt but that the example of the first one would have been of use to the others; but it is a sad truth, that many human creatures who are gifted with sense, and ought to use it, act just as foolishly as these poor flies have done.

"Could we imagine the first fly who was tempted by the honey, able to reason and to speak, after he had found it impossible to get himself free; what do you think he would be likely to say?"

"He would say, don't come here, don't come here, brother flies, for I cannot get out."

"So, we may well suppose, Edgar," said his mamma; "and in reply, the other flies might say, 'Oh! you think yourself very wise, and able to instruct us, but we can take care of ourselves; you are fond of honey, and so are we; but we are not so foolish as to plunge into it head foremost, we only mean to sip a little, and then fly away.'"

"I am very sorry for the poor flies, I wish they could escape; I wish that they had sense," cried Edgar.

"I wish, my dear little boy had sense—true sense," called in the Bible, *wisdom*," said

his mamma, "for he is in great danger; as great as that of any of these little flies, if he does not take heed."

"Do you mean ME, Mamma," asked Edgar?

"I do, my child."

"Tell me, Mamma, how I am in danger? And how can I be like a fly?"

"Well, listen to me. The world in which we live, may be compared to that cup of honey, because it is full of what is sweet and attractive to our natural hearts; there are many things in it to please our eyes, and ears, and taste; to tempt us to seek enjoyment and satisfaction in them; in short, to lead us away from God, and fasten us to low and earthly pleasures. Now, we are, not only by nature, as foolish as the flies, but much more so. We have, in ourselves, an evil, wicked, corrupt heart, which does not love God nor desire him; we long to taste this honey, and alas! too often, after having tasted it, we get entangled deeper and deeper; the soul becomes clogged with earthly cares and affections; every day it becomes less and less affected by the things of God—its chief concern is, perhaps, 'what shall I eat? and what shall I drink? and wherewithal shall I be clothed?'

and at last, the poor soul is required, and has to leave the body, in the midst of all the pleasures in which it had taken delight."

"Oh! Mamma, that is a dreadful thought. Is there nobody to prevent us from falling into this danger? Is there no one to help us out, if we do fall into it?"

"Yes, my dear child, I am glad, indeed, to tell you that there is a remedy for both cases; but as you are very young as yet, and have not been exposed to much of the trials or temptations of this world, I would earnestly hope and pray, that the Lord may bless my instructions, and lead you to look for the aid of his Holy Spirit, whereby alone you can be guided into the narrow path, and kept from venturing into so serious a danger. To all those who have wandered from the ways of God, there are blessed words in Scripture, written to encourage them to return unto the Lord Jesus, who came to 'seek and to save that which was lost.' But how much better is it to give up our hearts to him while they are young and tender, before the seeds of sin have had time to strike deep and acquire strength, and also before repeated acts of disobedience and rebellion against God, and repeated neglects

of his will, have rendered us hardened and insensible to his love."

"Yes, indeed, I think it would be better," answered little Edgar; "yet, Mamma, I hardly know what you mean by the *trials and temptations of the world.* I don't know any thing I could do that would be as dangerous to *me* as the honey is to the flies."

"Think *what you are fondest of*, Edgar, and you may soon find out where the danger lies; 'even a child is known by his doings,' says the Word of God, 'whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.' The love of one's self, the love of praise, the desire for amusement, or pleasing the taste in eating and drinking, or anxiety for fine clothes and possessions, or restlessness and desire to change one's scenes and occupations, or self-indulgence in every shape; these are all more or less the sins and temptations of childhood.

"Now, they may show themselves in this way. A little boy may be greedy, discontented, self-willed, ill-tempered, wishing for toys and getting tired of them; always asking for indulgences and dissatisfied with them; he may be vain of his appearance, or of his supposed

cleverness; he may be covetous and unfeeling. When he grows up, if his heart remains unchanged, he will show the very same character, only more strongly marked and with more powerful effect over him; the desire for toys and other self-gratifications will, then, perhaps, lead him to seek pleasure in the ball room and the theatre; his taste for eating and drinking, and other pleasures, will bring him into company and worldly parties; the habit of looking for amusement will lead him, perhaps, from home, and fill him with idle and foolish thoughts; he will have little or no time to think about his soul, his heart being so full of the world, and the things of the world; and so, step by step, like the poor fly in the honey, first the lip tastes and then the foot fixes, and then the wings are clogged, and then to fly away becomes nearly impossible; and so end the hopes of an immortal spirit, because he chose his part in the things of time instead of those of eternity."

"Aha!" cried little Emma, Edgar's sister, who had ceased playing about the room, in order to hear what her mamma and brother were saying; "I know a story very like that, about a little bird that was naughty, and flew away

from its mamma against her advice, and the trouble it fell into."

"What story," said Edgar.

"A story in verse; I read it in a little book to-day, and got it off by heart. Mamma, may I tell it to Edgar?"

"You may, my dear."

So his sister Emma repeated the following verses—

A little bird sat singing,
  Sat singing on a tree;
And it said, "my pretty nestling,
  Come in and sit by me."
"Oh! no, Mamma," the nestling cried,
  "I long the world to see."

"Come in, my foolish nestling,
  You'll be far happier here,
And shelter in my bosom soft,
  Where you have nought to fear;
Believe me, I have tried the world,
  And found it cold and drear."

"Oh! say not so," the young bird cried,
  And plumed her downy wing;
"I see the sun so cheerful shine,
  And brighten every thing;
I long these heavy woods to leave,
  And breathe the flowers of spring."

So up the little nestling raised
  Her tiny form on high,
And stretched her downy pinions wide,
  To reach the sunny sky;
And wander'd from her safer home,
  Midst brighter scenes to fly.

She thought the world a lovely place
  She hopp'd from flower to flower;
She danced upon the eglantine,
  That wreathed the blooming bower,
And many a gay companion met,
  To pass the trifling hour.

"Come back, come back," the mother cried,
  With care upon her brow;
She saw her young one's wanderings,
  From her green and sheltered bough;
But still the foolish bird replied,
  "Not *yet*—I will just now!"

But, ah! the time came ne'er again,
  That parent kind to see;
The snare was spread to catch her feet
  Ere she had time to flee;
And she was doomed for ever then
  To sad captivity.

And from her little golden cage,
  Was heard her mournful sigh;
Although her food was dainty,
  Her wailings reached the sky;
From all her friends beloved shut up,
  To pine away and die.

And thus, dear little children,
  Attend my warning word,
Nor slight like her the voice of love,
  Which she so often heard.
Be wise—and thus escape the woe
  Of this poor naughty bird.

If parents kind should mark the bound,
  From which you should not stray;
Keep closely by their guardian side,
  And never break away:
Till you are trained for upward flight,
  To heaven's eternal day.

And they will teach you that in heaven,
  A Father greater still,
Is waiting to receive the child
  Who longs to know his will;
A Saviour, too, who stands prepared
  His heart with joy to fill.

That world of blessedness was lost
  By wandering far from God;
And would we all its joys regain,
  We must retrace the road;
And wash our stains of guilt away
  In Christ's atoning blood.

"That's a fable;" said Edgar; "birds never speak."

"Yes," returned Emma, "but you know a fable is a kind of story, invented to teach us

something *wise*, in an amusing way, and I am very fond of fables; and were not you and mamma inventing a fable just now, when you were supposing what flies would say if they could speak."

Edgar made no reply to this, but turning to his mamma, he said, "After all, Mamma, it is very *natural* to wish to see a little of the world."

"It *is* very natural, Edgar."

"Then what can be the harm," asked Edgar, "of wishing for it?"

"If Adam had never fallen, my dear child, all that is natural would have been wise and good; because his nature was made after the image of God, pure, and holy, and upright; but when he turned away from God, his nature became perverted, that is, his inclinations led him to evil instead of to good; we are all born in the image of sinful Adam, and therefore we must watch against sin in every thing we do, or think, or feel. There is hardly anything that is *natural* for us to like, which is not in this respect dangerous."

"How, Mamma," said Edgar in surprise, "is it not natural for us to eat, and drink, and sleep, and can there be sin in any of these"?

"There need not be, for these blessings were ordained by our kind and merciful God, for our refreshment, but there often is, because *sinful man* is the creature who enjoys them; he often eats too much, and too delicately, indulging greediness and daintiness, when he ought to seek only strength and support for his bodily frame. Is not this wrong?"

"Yes, Mamma."

"He also drinks when he is not thirsty, wine and strong liquors, which far from satisfying nature, often cause an unhealthy thirst. Is not this wrong?"

"Yes, Mamma."

"And not to speak of *men* only, do not little boys often lie longer in their beds than they ought to do, after they have been refreshed by sufficient rest, thus making sin for themselves, in that which is of itself innocent and right; wasting their precious hours of life, and giving themselves up to sloth and indolence'.

"Aha!" said little Emma, I recollect:

'T'was the voice of the sluggard,
I heard him complain:
You have waked me too soon,
I must slumber again.'"

Edgar blushed deeply: his mamma had touched a tender point, for he was rather a lazy, sluggish child, and he did not like to pursue the subject in this way any further.

"Mamma," said he at last, after some pause, "it is very hard to be religious. I don't think I can ever be so."

"Not *of yourself*, Edgar," replied his mamma, "certainly, you never can; but it is an awful way for you to speak; it is in other words, casting off God and Christ, and refusing heaven and happiness for ever; for religion is only the *name* for that plan which is revealed in the Bible, which teaches men how to get to heaven. It is also another way of saying, what I know you would shudder at if put in such language as this, 'I choose the enemies of God, the devil, and his angels, for my companions, and misery and wickedness for my lot here, and for ever, hereafter.'"

"Oh! Mamma," cried Edgar. "I would not do that, indeed I would not; but I feel as if the way to get to heaven was very hard. I hear you speak of the heart being changed, of the necessity of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, of getting power over sin, and of having love to

God; but *I feel that I cannot do these things!*"

Edgar's mamma rose up from her seat, and taking from a stand, where plants were arranged in flower pots, a beautiful double hyacinth, she called him to her, and said, "Do you admire this flower, my child?"

"Oh! yes, Mamma, very much indeed! It is in full bloom! What a fine delicate blue; and how sweet it smells."

"Last summer," said his mamma, "I received a present of two roots, which were said to be of the finest kind of hyacinth; this flower is the produce of one of them, I put it into this glass stand early in November, with plenty of water, which I renewed occasionally, as I found necessary, and it has blossomed as you see."

"And where is the other root, Mamma?

"Here it is, Edgar," answered his mother, taking a shrivelled root out of a drawer, "I mislaid it, and did not discover where it was till a few days ago."

"What a difference!" exclaimed Edgar, looking at the two roots.

"Do you know why I drew your attention to them Edgar?' asked his mamma.

He paused awhile, "yes, I think I do," said

he, "but please Mamma, to explain it, for I do not quite understand the matter."

"It was just for this reason, Edgar: the shrivelled root is an emblem of man in his natural state; it cannot grow, or produce blossoms or fragance by its own effort; and it dries up and perishes at last, if not planted in the earth or nourished by water. The other root is an emblem of man under the influence of divine grace. As this hyacinth, by means of the care with which I attended to it, and the water with which I supplied it, was enabled to throw out roots, and to produce a stalk and flowers; in like manner the soul, when the Lord undertakes the care of it, and gives it the teaching of the Holy Spirit, is made to flourish in those graces which nature has no power to produce, and is adorned with the beauty of holiness, to the glory and praise of God.

"Now, *you* have no strength of your own, to do anything that is really good in the sight of God, your heart must be entirely changed.

"Turn, then to the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and ask *him* to undertake this great work for you; to send the Holy Ghost the Comforter, the Spirit of truth unto you; to give

you a new heart and a right spirit, and then you will find that religion, or the service of God, is not only easy, but pleasant also."

"Emma, can you remember any text that says something like this?"

"Oh! yes, Mamma" cried Emma, "our Saviour says in the eleventh chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, 'my yoke is easy and my burden is light,' and in Proverbs, the third chapter and seventeenth verse 'her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace.'"

"Well, Mamma," said Edgar, "I still think that if I was older it would be easier for me to be religous. I know that you; and papa, and many of our friends are both *religious* and *happy;* but, then, I think that you must have seen a little of the world *first*, and enjoyed yourselves in what I call pleasures, before you resolved on giving them all up."

"Why, Edgar, did you never hear of *religious children?*" asked his mother.

"Yes, Mamma."

"You are making then, I fear, a foolish conclusion, for every thing I have said is, for the purpose of showing that the earlier we begin

our Christian course the better. Those who have learned betimes to love Christ are likely to love him most, Edgar; and those whose hearts have early turned to heavenly joys instead of earthly, are likely to be the happiest and strongest Christians when they grow up into life. For this reason, happy, indeed, are the children who make no delay in choosing the Lord for their portion. But, now, my love, as we have conversed a good deal on these subjects, I will just relate a story to you, which proves what strength of grace, what noble courage, what contempt of the poor pleasures of this life, as also of reproach and scorn, as well as death itself, for the faith of Christ, was manifested by a little boy, who was put to death on that account, when probably not much older than you."

"What was his name, Mamma?" asked Emma.

"His name was Cyril. He lived in a town called Cæsarea; a name, which you may remember reading about in the Acts of the Apostles."

"Yes," said Edgar, "where Cornelius the good Centurion lived."

"You are right. About 260 years after our Saviour's time, there was a great persecution

against the Christians. Those who loved and acknowledged their Lord, risked their lives, and many of them were put to death in the most cruel manner.

"It was not *then* a question as it is *now*, 'shall I deny myself a few worldly gratifications and become a follower of Christ?' but it was, shall I face reproach, torture, imprisonment and death for his name's sake?' Many, by the grace of God, were enabled to make this good choice, and among others the little boy I am going to tell you about; he loved his Saviour, and was continually speaking of him and praising him, and avowing his belief in him, even where threats and blows were used to dissuade him from it. Some children of his own age were among his persecutors, and at last his own father turned him out of doors. He was then brought before a Roman magistrate, who said to him, 'Child, I am ready to pardon you, and to let your father take you home again, and you may, by and by, inherit his property if you will only be wise and concerned for your own interest.' But this dear little boy, knew that it is better for a man to lose the whole world than to lose his own soul, Matt. xvi. 26: and that his

Blessed Saviour had been pleased to promise that those who confess his name before men, shall be acknowledged by him when He comes in the glory of his Father, to judge the world; so he answered boldly and faithfully, 'I am quite willing to suffer. God will take me up; I am not distressed at being turned out of doors; I shall have a better home; I am not afraid to die; it will only send me to a better life.' When he said this, the magistrate ordered him to be bound and led to execution; but being disposed to save the child, if possible, he privately ordered his officers to bring him back again, when they had shown him the place; for he hoped that the sight of the fire which was prepared to burn him, would overcome his decision. Cyril, however, remained steadfast and immoveable. As soon as he was brought back, the magistrate began compassionately to reason with him, and to persuade him to give up Christ; but the young martyr replied, 'Your fire and sword cannot hurt me, I am going to a better home: despatch me quickly that I may get to it sooner.' The bystanders were all in tears; he noticed it, and said to them, 'You ought to be glad, and so

you would be, if you knew the city to which I am going.' Thus he went to death.

"Now, this firmness could not be natural in a child; but the Holy Spirit had so filled his heart with love to Christ, that it enabled him to endure anything for his sake. Cyril could die but once, but to him might be applied that encouraging promise in the second chapter of Revelation, 'He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.'"

"Dear Mamma," cried Emma, "what a wonderful boy! Is that story quite true?"

"It is, indeed," answered her mother,"

"I wish that I might be like Cyril," said Edgar.

"You may be like him in FAITH, my dear child, though probably you will never have it put to so severe a trial as his; but the faith that sustained martyrs through fire, and sword, and torment of every kind, is the very same in its nature and effects as that which we must now receive from God to enable us to devote ourselves to his service. We may not have trials like theirs; but we shall all have something to prove our faith and love; something to try us whether

we are Christians in name only, or in deed and in truth.

"I must leave you now, my children, as I have some business that requires my time elsewhere; but I hope you will remember the subject we have been talking about, and pray earnestly to your heavenly Father that He may send you his Holy Spirit, to awaken and convert your hearts while you art yet young.

"Remember the text which says, NOW is the accepted time, and NOW is the day of salvation."

Little Sarah.

LITTLE SARAH.—Page 141.

LITTLE SARAH.

BY SIDNEY O. MOORE.

AUNT Alice sat by the fireside; in her hand was a gold locket, her eyes were fixed upon a small braid of beautiful, bright golden hair, and her thoughts were far away. Jane and Leonore had been long playing near her; but at last they came up to their aunt's chair, and perceiving the object of her attention, asked eagerly to whom the bright hair belonged.

"It belonged to your dear little Aunt Sarah," said Miss Edgerton.

"But I never saw Aunt Sarah; I never heard of Aunt Sarah," said Leonore; "do tell me all about her."

Aunt Edgerton told all about little Sarah, and the following sketch was the substance of her account:—

Little Sarah was the youngest of a large

family, the play-thing and pet of all. She was a bright and happy child, her large blue eyes were full of thought and feeling, long golden brown hair fell in thick curls round her large open forehead, and her skin resembled lilies and roses. She was full of life and animation, dancing rather than walking over the gardens and lawn, cheering every one with the sunshine of her presence, and the quiet drollery of her remarks.

She was always on the watch to do some kind act. If she saw any child weeping, she would raise her little pinafore, and dry the falling tears, and add caress to caress until smiles returned.

If a beggar appeared before the hall-door, little Sarah ran in to plead for her: "Oh, Mamma, there is such a poor-looking woman at the door, and a poor little child with her, come and see what they want, and give it to them." A kinder heart, or brighter intellect I never met in any child. How often the fairest bud is removed to blossom in Paradise. She

was so richly gifted we could hardly hope to keep her long in this world. It is a pleasure to write or speak of her; her memory is fragrant as the perfume of gathered violets.

When she was about four years old, she began to learn to read; and after her lessons were over every day, she used to like to read a few verses in the Bible. She did not treat the Bible as a common book, but as the precious gift of her heavenly Father. She often said, "Find out verses about God, I like verses with God in them;" and once added, "I wish I was in heaven, for I love God and Jesus Christ."

She was very fond of music, and warbled ten or twelve airs in perfect tune at four years of age.

She was very fond of her little garden, and of the birds which she daily fed; but I think she loved her Bible better than any of these things. One day she ran to meet me, with a little book in her hand, her face beaming with delight. "Do look at these verses, they are so very

beautiful." I looked at the texts, (now forgotten,) and was surprised that she could understand them, much less read them with a pleasure which lighted up her face with joy.

On another occasion, she was repeating the hymn—

> "'Tis the voice of the sluggard, I hear him complain,
> You have waked me too soon, I must slumber again."

And when she came to the line—

> "But he scarce reads his Bible, and never loves thinking,"

she stopped, and observed, "then he did not love God, since he did not love God's Bible."

We may all try the reality of our love to God, by our love of his holy book. We cannot love him, if we leave his book unopened from Sunday to Sunday. Many a Bible now lying neglected on a shelf, and covered with dust, will hereafter witness against its owner.

Sarah was very fond of Scripture stories, and the lives of religious children. I have still

a book of this kind, bearing many marks from her pencil.

She often puzzled me with curious questions; and one day, in the midst of a flood of childish tears, she suddenly stopped to enquire, why her tears tasted of salt.

When Sarah was about seven years old, we left our pleasant home in the country for a city home, which we hoped to find still more pleasant. Soon after, Sarah became a delicate child. She no longer flitted about like a butterfly, or danced in buoyancy of spirit, but moved noiselessly, with languid step. Her cheek lost its brilliant colour; she loved reading and music more, and play less; she became quiet and thoughtful, only occasionally uttering a droll remark, flashing with her former spirit. Her inquiring mind, however, still found pleasure in visiting museums, zoological gardens, and other objects of interest.

The death of an uncle made a great impression on her mind, and she began to think frequently of a future state.

December 29th she said, that she feared that her sins would prevent her going to heaven, that she must have told a falsehood, though she could not remember it. "I am afraid that I may die to-night, and I am not ready, I am not ready."

I spoke of the Lord Jesus, and asked if she loved him.

"I think I do."

"Could any one but the Lord Jesus save you?"

"No."

"Do you believe that he is willing to save you?"

"Yes."

"Then pray to him, and he will certainly be your Saviour." She prayed in silence for a few minutes, and then fell asleep.

It is a wise remark, that the hour of children's rest is an important one to mothers, and they should study to impress the minds of their infant charge with the feeling, "I will lay down in peace, and take my rest; for it is thou, Lord, only, that maketh me to dwell in safety."

January 5th.—Soon after dear Sarah had been placed in her little bed, she suddenly burst into tears, exclaiming, "O what shall I do, if I die in my sleep, I am not ready, I am not ready."

"It is not likely that you should die so soon; but pray to Jesus, and he will make you ready."

"O tell me what to say."

"Any words will do; any words you like."

"I don't know what to say; O tell me."

She remained a few minutes in silent prayer, with her little hands raised and clasped together, and soon ceased to sob. The text, "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear," seemed to comfort her much. Her childish heart, though now hoping forgiveness, still trembled at the thoughts of entering an unknown and unseen world, without a friend or relative to accompany her. She was reminded that the Lord Jesus was ever near all who trust in him, to help them through the dark valley, and receive them into joy. "Besides, he could take your friends with you if he wished;

but if he pleases to take one at a time, surely he cannot mistake; he knows what is best for all." "O yes, he always knows best," she replied. At the close of our conversation, I asked, "Are you now afraid to die alone?" "*No, for Jesus is in heaven.*"

I watched her gently and calmly yielding to repose; at intervals raising her eyes in prayer, until slumber sealed her thoughts.

Although she had gained the rock which is Christ, she was often at this time swept away again into deep waters, again to return and cling to the rock with the strong grasp of faith.

January 7th.—After prayers she seemed lost in thought. I asked her if she was still thinking of her devotions; and as she now added to her usual form, many little petitions, silently expressed in childlike thoughts, I asked if she had prayed to be prepared for heaven.

"I did, but that was not what I was thinking of."

"Perhaps you prayed for long life?"

"Indeed I did not."

She then burst into tears, saying, "I was thinking that I might not go to heaven. I was afraid that I might die without being prepared."

"Pray to Christ, and he will not turn you away. 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool.'"

"Is that promise intended for every one who prays?"

"Yes: Jesus said, 'Come unto me all ye weary and heavy laden, and *I will give you rest.* Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find.'"

Little Sarah simply believed that what Jesus promised, that would he do; and she rested for safety on his word, for forgiveness for the past.

"But what shall I do, if I sin again before I die?"

"Come again to Christ. As Mr. Gregg told us yesterday, 'Ask for daily pardon for daily sin.'"

Only the work of God's Holy Spirit could teach this amiable and excellent child, that she

was still a sinner in the sight of God, though she was faultless in the sight of man. The knowledge of her sinfulness made her feel the want of a Saviour; so she came to the Lord Jesus, and became happy—happy in life, happy in death, happier still now, in heaven.

Blessed are they who find out in time, that all, even those who have not sinned before man, have sinned before God; and that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Not the self-righteous, but those who know themselves to be sinners, did Jesus die to save.

March 31st.—She was again troubled by the fear of carrying her sins with her through the gates of death; but soon after repeated the invitation of the Saviour, "Come unto me, *all* ye weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Once more she laid her sins at the feet of Jesus, and again found pardon and peace.

How well has Bunyan described the progress of the Pilgrim. This child of seven years old, like Christian, struggled in the slough of despond;

like him, found the promises of God were as firm stepping-stones; like him, fell back into the slough; like him, found her sins as a burden heavy to bear; but like him, at last reached the foot of the cross, where, in the presence of her Saviour's atonement, the burden rolled away, and at last disappeared.

There are some who would say that I should have silenced her doubts, and turned her thoughts from such solemn subjects. I am glad that I did not. I am glad that I did not check her, nor put a false salve on the wounds of conscience. Though she was a little child, she was an immortal soul. Three months of mingled hopes and fears were followed by a year of perfect peace, in which her advanced knowledge, and experience of Christian life, often astonished and startled us; and this year of peace was followed by years of glory.

After these three months of anxiety, she found that rest which Jesus promised. She built her house on the rock, which is Christ, and lived

happily. Morning and evening she brought all her wants and failings before God, and sought pardon and strength. We remarked what a long time she spent on her knees. And I observed this one morning to her. "I have so many things to ask for," she answered with simplicity.

She no longer feared, nor wept, nor doubted. She loved God as a good Father. She loved Christ as a dear Saviour. She thought of them, until they seemed friends ever present, ever near her; and for all things, she drew near to them in prayer.

"The Christian's Daily Bread," and other religious books were her favourite companions, both at home, and at the sea-side. The former little book is still marked in pencil by her small and unsteady hand. In "Bickersteth's Christian Psalmody," she took a delight unusual in one so young.

During the summer she passed some weeks at the sea-side, and greatly enjoyed her rambles on the shore, but she often returned fatigued.

The fresh breeze failed to restore her health; and while she watched the ebbing tide, her own life was silently ebbing away, though we knew it not.

Had I the least idea that she should not live to see another summer, I should have recorded a thousand brilliant remarks, or religious sayings, which have now passed from the page of memory.

The few conversations already narrated, were noted down on the nights on which they occurred, and were sometimes noted by firelight, lest the light of a candle should disturb little Sarah. Her fears of death, hopes of salvation, and vivid impressions of eternity, were so strongly contrasted with her child-like life, passed in lesson or in play, that I did not wish to forget them; but I did not keep any journal for the remainder of the year.

During the variety which always enlivens a watering place, little Sarah's religious feelings maintained their ground. Although she enjoyed

the hours which were spent in exercise out of doors, she seemed still more to enjoy quiet reading at home. The Bible was still her beloved book; and during her play-hours she often read hymns.

I seem to see her still before me, with her hymn-book in her hand, her expressive countenance brightening, now and then, over a new idea or favourite passage—strange amusement, I thought it, for a little child.

She was now placid and happy at all times; the shadow of a fear never crossed her mind.

She passed the winter at home, under the care of an aunt, who dearly loved her, and they read the Scriptures daily together.

March 20th.—This dear relative repeated many texts for her. Her favourite text was, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." "I often think of that text when I am at prayers," she observed, "and I try to believe that I shall get what I ask for, because you know, that if I believe that I shall get them, I shall get them."

In the beginning of April symptoms of water on the brain appeared. She was still in the habit of reading one or two chapters daily, with her kind aunt. On the 8th of April, she read, for the last time, (the chapter selected was the 7th of Revelation) and afterwards, for the last time, she took carriage exercise. She now suffered much from headache, but passed most of her time in slumber. From the 13th she was confined to bed, and spoke but seldom. 14th—On being asked if she had prayed the night before, she replied, "yes." 15th—I asked her if she could still pray. She could not speak, but raised her eyes to heaven and then looked meaningly at me.

When speech became too great an effort, she still lifted up her eyes as if in prayer; and at times listened attentively to a few favourite texts.

Early on the morning of Wednesday, the 18th of April, death approached her gently. She slept; but her little hand was raised in convulsive quivering. Her face still wore a beautiful

and calm expression of perfect peace. We watched the angelic features, and were soothed by the certainty that she was passing painlessly to heaven. We could hardly tell the exact moment of her departure, so gently did she fall asleep in Jesus.* On the tombstone which covers her earthly remains, it is written—

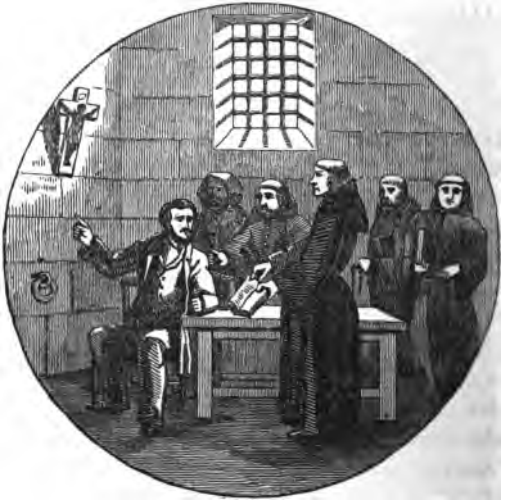
"And he said, is it well with the child?
And she answered, it is well."

A PORTRAIT.

A sunbeam lingers on her golden hair,
A spirit shineth in her bright blue eye,
That ever watcheth, watcheth silently
To do some act of love or childish aid.
Health laughs upon her throne, the rosy cheek;
While on her forehead, pale and nobly high,
Intelligence beams forth;
Joy lends its elasticity to steps
That bound along, like fawns in forest wild,
Save when the voice of sorrow mourneth low,
Then quickly, gently she draweth near,
To dry the tear, and soothe the suffering;
Stands there a child of poverty without,
To seek a pittance for his withered frame,
With her he has a ready advocate;
With patient care she cons her daily task,
And loving home, looks onwards still to heaven.

* Aged eight years and eight months.

Martyrs of Florence.



FRANCESCO MADIAI IN PRISON.

THE MARTYRS OF FLORENCE.

FRANCESCO AND ROSA MADIAI.

"MAMMA," said Lucy Monro, "tell me a story of some of the martyrs."

"Shall I tell you of martyrs who perished many years ago, or of two sufferers for Christ, who are this moment living in the prisons of Tuscany."

"Oh! Mamma, I should like to hear of people still living; I might hear them or see them some day, if I should travel to Italy."

Mrs. Monro found her story too long to tell, so she wrote it down as follows:—

Francesco Madiai, and Rosa his wife, are people of humble rank, but their story is now

exciting much interest throughout Europe. Francesco was a Courier, that is, a messenger who journeys a little in advance of travellers, to announce their arrival at hotels. Rosa lived a long time in England, as lady's maid in a nobleman's family. They were both Romanists; but Francesco, while residing in America, became a Protestant.

Soon after, as they had saved a little money, they married, and took a house.

On the 17th of August, 1851, the gendarmes visited their house, and though both husband and wife were absent, the police searched every room, from the ground floor to the attic. Two Bibles, and a copy of Hawker's Morning Portion were found, and carried off.

An Englishman and two Italians were waiting in the house for the return of the Madiai. The gendarmes waited too; and when Francesco returned, the four friends were all taken to prison.

Rosa said to her husband, "Take courage,

my friend, you have not done any harm, and you will soon be free."

But instead of obtaining his freedom, Francesco heard the sad news that Rosa also had been arrested, and was now locked up in the same prison, though in a different cell.

The Italians did not dare to hurt the Englishman; and the Consul obliged them to release him in twenty-four hours. But the other friends of the Madiai were allowed to choose whether they preferred perpetual imprisonment, or perpetual banishment. They chose the latter, and left their native land to wander homeless and destitute.

It would have been happy for Francesco and Rosa, if they had been allowed to go into banishment also; but their fate was more severe. Locked up in very dirty cells, and never allowed to see each other, Rosa fell ill, and begged that a physician might be sent to her. She was not allowed to see one; no, not even when she seemed to be in a dying state. When she got a

little better, she was taken before a judge, who asked her if she was the person accused of "blasphemy and impiety."

"If to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as my only Saviour be this, then I am that person —but let God judge."

Do you know, dear child, what the judge called blasphemy? It was this—Rosa said that the Virgin Mary was a good woman, but that she was not the queen of heaven, as the monks impiously called her, and Rosa would not pray to her. She and her husband were placed in prison without having done any thing wrong, but merely because they read the Bible, and were Protestants.

Little child, you may be thankful that you were born in happy England; and that you need not fear that the walls of a prison shall ever enclose you or your parents for obeying God, by reading his holy Book, and refusing to worship the Virgin.

Week after week passed by, and neither Rosa

nor Francesco had any one to speak to. Their cells were silent as the grave; they could never hear a clock nor a bell, nor any one moving. At last, Francesco asked if he might have his watch, that he might count the hours, and that its ticking might "break the silence of the tomb." Even this trifle was refused him.

He was now to be removed to another prison, (Decr. 1851;) and some kind friends, with much trouble, obtained leave for him to see his wife before he went. It was a painful meeting; for the health of both had suffered much from confinement, and each was surprised to see the change which five months of prison life had produced. Still, each encouraged the other saying, "It is a blessing to be allowed to suffer for the sake of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

The doors of both cells were afterwards opened for a moment and the husband and wife ran into each other's arms; but they were separated again very quickly.

At last, on the 5th of June, 1852, they were brought to trial. In Italy, six judges consult together, and act both as jury and as judges. Before these men, the prisoners were placed in the dock, guarded by several gendarmes. The doors were shut, lest the people, or the reporters of the newspapers, should hear what was going on.

Whenever Francesco was asked a question about his religion, he answered in the words of the Bible, a habit which enraged the judges very much. Rosa answered so well, that we are reminded of the promise, "When ye are brought before kings and rulers for my sake, take no thought what ye shall speak; for in the same hour, the Holy Ghost shall teach you what you ought to say."

The trial lasted two days. It was proved that they had lived peaceably and quietly; and that Rosa had been kind to the sick, and generous to the poor.

Some of the judges declared that both the prisoners were innocent. For twenty-four hours

sentence was delayed; at last, the President gave his casting vote, and the Madiai were condemned. Francesco Madiai was to "suffer four years' and eight months' solitary confinement, and hard labour; and Rosa three years and ten months of the same. The ten months they had already passed in prison, were not to be counted as part of the sentence." Besides this, they were to pay the cost of their trial, which amounted to two hundred pounds; a large sum for people in their humble station to be fined. After they had fulfilled this long term, and paid this fine, they were to remain three years more under the strict care of the police.

Soon after the last separation, Rosa wrote the following beautiful letter to her husband. Read it, my child, again and again; it is worthy of a place in your memory. It is worthy of one of the ancient martyrs.

My Dear Madiai,

Thou knowest how I have always loved thee, how much more, then, must I love thee now, that we have

been together in the battle of the great King, and that we have been cast down and not vanquished. I hope that, through the merits of Jesus, God the Father has accepted our testimony and that he will give us grace to be able to drink, even to the last drop, the bitter cup which is prepared for us, and that too, with thanksgiving.

My good Madiai—our life, what is it? A day—a day of grief; yesterday, young, to-day, old; but, nevertheless, we can now say with old Simeon, "Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for our eyes have seen thy salvation."

Courage, my beloved; since we know by the Holy Ghost, that *that* Christ who was laden with reproach, trodden under foot, and despised, is our Saviour; and by his holy light and power we find ourselves set to defend his holy cross, and Christ dying for us; we receiving his reproaches, that we may afterwards partake of his holy glory. Do not fear, if our condemnation be severe; God who caused the chains to fall from Peter, and opened the gates of his prison, will not forget even us.

Be of good courage; let us cast ourselves entirely into the hands of God, let me see thee joyful, as I hope through the same grace, thou wilt see me joyful.

With all her heart embraces thee,

Thy affectionate wife,

ROSA MADIAI.

"This letter was written by La Madiai, in prison, June 7, 1852, when the public minister had determined that she should be condemned, as she afterwards was condemned, to the penalty of forty-six months of the Ergastolo, and her husband to fifty-six months of public works."—*The Prisoners of Hope.* p. 71.

Francesco had received the disappointment of his hopes with much calmness, "merely saying, the Lord's will be done. He had during the long day, occupied himself in walking up and down the horrid room he had been placed in, repeating Psalms, chiefly Psalm cxvi."

The prisoners appealed to a higher court, but their sentence was confirmed.

But they were not allowed to lie in their cells neglected, all the Protestants in Europe seemed to unite in their favour. From Prussia, Protestant Germany, part of France, Holland, Switzerland and England, a cry was raised on their behalf. Good men (and among them Lord Roden)

were sent to Florence, to entreat the Grand Duke to set the Madiai free.

These good Samaritans visited the Murate prison. They found Madiai in perfect peace, although suffering from continual illness. "There is need of patience," he said, while his face was cheerful, and he bowed to the will of God. He also said, 'The comfort and joy of the Holy Spirit never changes with me; however it may be with my poor body, I am always happy; God has been with me all the time that I have been in prison, and he will always be with me, as long as I remain here, and I am as sure that he will be with me until death.' He wished to get a supply of clean linen, &c., adding 'if permitted.' We found, on enquiry, it was *not* permitted. He instantly smiled, saying, 'Well, all things according to the will of God.' He requested me to tell his wife, that his prayer was that God would go with them to their prisons, and that he felt sure that God would be their companion there. I have seen Christians die

in perfect peace and happiness, but I have never seen so complete triumph in the midst of life.

"Afterwards we went to the Bargello; Rosa's sufferings were great, but they soon assumed the character of Christian fortitude. She at once took leave of the various hopes and fears which had long kept her noble spirit in painful exercise, and turned at once to her strong-hold. 'Tell all,' she said, 'not to pray for our freedom, but for that increase of faith which may enable us to suffer cheerfully.' And then before us all, and the attendants, she burst forth into fervent prayer for more faith, more love to Jesus.

"She sent love to you all; 'Tell the brethren, should they be called to follow us, to bear what may be appointed them to suffer, but never to forsake their God! I desire not only to take up the cross, but to bear it cheerfully with abounding thanksgiving. What an honour it is for such unworthy creatures to be called to suffer in the Lord's name.'"

Rosa has been removed to a better cell, and

allowed to obtain a few comforts. The Archbishop of Lucca has visited her, and tried to shake her faith in vain. Then the Grand Duke's mother visited her, but the poor ladies' maid was not dazzled nor persuaded by her sovereign's mother.

A late account is dated Voltena, October 21, 1852.

"In this place," says the writer, "is the fortress where Francesco Madiai is confined; and it has been my duty and privilege to attend upon him for the last month, during a suffering illness, which has, no doubt, been occasioned by the cruel persecution which he has endured, and the protracted confinement.

"The special order which I obtained, has enabled me to be with him for about an hour daily, and for the most part I was with him alone. Whatever may have been his burden, temptation, or trial, we took counsel together, and cast all on the Lord.

"His bodily weakness has been very great

and his nerves were much shaken, but the life and health of his soul have been untouched; to God and to the word of his grace, he has not only been steadfast, but even joyfully devoted.

"The testimony for which he has suffered, is that to which he cleaves unto death, viz: the word of God received into his heart by faith.

"His delight in the Bible appears to be in proportion to the sufferings he has endured in testifying to its truth, and to its grace and glory. God has evidently honoured and blessed this faithful witness to his word.

"In speaking of Francesco (at Voltena) I must be understood to include Rosa, imprisoned at Lucca, for they are of one faith and one spirit. Her treatment was latterly improved, and her noble spirit almost forgets what she has gone through, in her striving to cheer and comfort her husband during his sickness.

"Francesco is still so feeble, that he will require the greatest care against exposure of any kind; and you must know that before this,

he was one of the halest and strongest of men. In one moment were they taken from active life to solitary cells—their house closed, and though it was opened again for lodgers for a short time, under the idea that the prosecution would soon close, it was finally given up, and their furniture, &c. (the fruits of their industry) were removed to a warehouse, and would, no doubt, be sold at a great loss. This they have borne without a word."

December 2, 1852.—A Christian friend visited the martyrs of Florence. He found Francesco Madiai feeble and worn out by sickness. He seemed sinking into a lethargy, but roused himself to say, "They are poisoning me; they put poison into every thing I eat."

It was said that this poison was of a nature to soften the brain, and to produce idiotcy before death. It was also reported soon after, that Francesco had died from its effects.

But this is not the case. Both the martyrs

are still enduring a living death, within the walls of their prisons.

At the beginning of the New Year, 1853, Mr. Colombe, Chaplain to the Prussian embassy, obtained leave to visit the prisoners. He said "he had never met with any one so completely living above the world, as that child of God, Francesco Madiai." Madiai told M. Colombe, that he had done with earthly things; that he believed it was God's will that he should die for His cause; and that he tried not to think of his dear wife, or her sufferings, except when in prayer. He said, too, "this blessed season (Christmas,) fills my heart with love to my Saviour, my friends, and my enemies, for whom I pray."

Florence, January 8, 1853.—On New Year's Day, Rosa gave a little treat to all the female prisoners, some pollenta, and a glass of wine, each. Rosa enjoys better health; her tall figure, and fine countenance, look dignified even in the prison dress, a coarse yellow and white-striped

linen, and a plain skull-cap of the same materials.

There are thirty other prisoners, for religion's sake, in Florence. How thankful should we be for living in a land where the Bible may be daily read in peace. May we, and all who are dear to us, prize the book of God, as do the Madiai.

The Iron Cage.

The feeble and delicate little Henri clung closely to the side of his elder brother."—Page 173.

THE IRON CAGE.

"WAKE, boys, arise, and follow me," said the rough gaoler, as he entered a cell in one of the largest prisons in Paris. It was still midnight, and the feeble and delicate little Henri clung closely to the side of his elder brother, as they passed dark vaults and gloomy passages, where the gaoler's torch, casting a faint light before them, seemed to make the darkness of the lofty walls more dark by contrast. At last they reached the well-barred door of a condemned cell; and a rusty key, creaking as it turned, admitted the children to their father's arms.

An hour quickly passed, and the gaoler's rough head again appeared at the door, "You have but five minutes more; not for twenty diamond rings, such as you gave me, would I risk meeting the patrol—be ready to part in five minutes."

The Duke again drew his children to his heart. "You hear, my dear sons," said he, "you hear the hammers at work on the scaffold on which I am doomed to die to-morrow. We cannot again meet on earth, let us seek to meet in heaven. Pray often, that the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, may be your Saviour. Pray that the Holy Spirit may prepare your hearts for heaven. Say this prayer: 'O God, for Christ's sake, give me thy Holy Spirit. O my Saviour, wash my sins away in thy precious blood. Amen.' Remember these, your dying father's prayers. My blood will suffice my enemies; they will blush to imprison children, and will, I hope, set you free. Tell your dear mother that I die happy, trusting in my Almighty Saviour,—that my last prayers were for her and for you."

The gaoler hastily entered, and removed the boys, but the malice of the wicked king, Louis XI., prepared for them another, a cruel meeting with their father.

Next morning the Duke was beheaded, and his young and innocent children were compelled to be present. Clothed in white, they were placed

at the foot of the scaffold, where they were sprinkled with their father's blood.

Henri fainted, and was carried back to the cell insensible. Philippe dashed himself on the ground, and wished that he were old enough to draw his sword against his father's murderers.

But if that beloved parent could have heard him, he would have said, "Did not our Saviour command us to forgive our enemies, and to pray for those who despitefully use and persecute us. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay."

Philippe ground his teeth, and clenched his small hand, as he paced his narrow cell; but when Henri regained his senses, he knelt down and prayed for himself, for his brother, and for the wicked king. And he received the strength and patience which he sought.

And now the boys hoped to be set free, and to be allowed to return to their mother, and to their beautiful Chateau, on the banks of the Garonne.

Philippe could hardly breathe freely in the close and gloom prison, and he longed to inhale again the fresh open air; to gallop again full speed over the extensive park; and to row again

the little boat which had been built expressly for him.

Henri could still less bear the hardships of prison life. Born feeble and delicate, had he been a Spartan baby, he would have been exposed to death on the mountain side; but as he was a French boy, his mother loved him better because he was sickly, and she reared him by the most tender care. Now his couch was of straw, his cell without fire. Poor tender plant shut up away from sunshine and air, to wither slowly away.

He was soon to suffer a more extraordinary confinement.

Only a few years before the Duke's death, the Cardinal de la Balue had invented an iron cage, in which no one could sit, nor lie down, nor stand up. He brought it to Louis XI., who was as much pleased with it, as he had expected; but who soon after shut him up in it, which he did not expect. He little thought when he was planning the iron bars, so as to prevent all comfort or rest, that he was planning for himself a torture which should last eleven years, and from which he was only freed by the death of the king. But so it happened.

Louis, delighted with his new mode of making a prison more terrible, soon got some more iron cages made after the pattern of the Cardinal's. These he often used; and even the historian, Philip de Comines, was confined in one of them for eight months.

Cruel as Louis was known to be, no one believed that he would have kept the Duke's little sons in prison; still less could it be supposed, that he would shut up children in his fearful cages.

Yet so it was. Three days after their father's death, they were removed from their cell, and placed in separate iron cages. Poor boys, they had still one comfort, they were placed in the same room, and could talk to each other.

Philippe was very strong and healthy, but his limbs soon became numb from his painful position; as to Henri, he suffered much in silence.

Often, both at home and in prison, had Philippe supported Henri's weak frame, but now it was Henri who strengthened his brother. "Think of our dear Saviour," he would say, "he bore scourging, and the thorny crown; his side was deeply wounded by the spear, and his hands were torn by sharp nails. He bore all these to save

us, Philippe; and he bore the still heavier weight of his Father's anger for sin. All for us, Philippe, and shall we not bear something for him, my brother? If God pleases, he can take us from this prison; but if not, let us bear his will, and the will of him who died for us."

"I cannot bear it, Henri."

"O dear Philippe, let us do what papa told us to do, what dear mamma told us to do before we were taken from her. Let us pray to Jesus for help, and he will help us. He loves us better than papa or mamma did; he will help us to bear whatever he sends.

"I never heard him speak," said Philippe, "and I never saw him, and I don't know if he loves us."

"But you heard what he said, Philippe—'I love them that love me.' I love him very much, and I feel in my heart that he loves me. He loves you too, my brother—only come to him."

Henri got weaker every day, but he spoke more and more of heaven.

Every morning the gaoler brought a loaf of bread and a jug of water, for each little prisoner, and set them down by the bars of the iron cages.

Philippe told the man that his young brother was sick, and that it would be an act of charity to take him out, and lay him on the floor of the cell. He begged hard, as if for his own life; but the gaoler did not answer, nor speak, he only made haste to go away.

Then Henri would try to comfort his brother, and would say, "I cannot eat of this bread much longer; but I shall be always near Him who said, 'I am the bread of life.' I cannot drink of this water much longer, but I shall drink of the water of life. Do not you remember that mamma told us that living water means the Holy Spirit; and if we pray for it now, it will cleanse and guide us here, and afterwards receive us into glory. Come, Philippe, and let us pray."

"I had a pleasant dream last night," said Philippe; "I dreamed that I was again at home. The draw-bridge was let down, and I was bounding over it, towards the great gate of the castle, and I saw mamma coming from the garden; and oh! how glad she was to see me. And there were lamps shining through the trees, and coloured lamps on arches over the doors, just as they were on the fête of my last birthday,"

Then both the children wept, as they thought of their far pleasant home.

But Henri was first comforted, and said, "I shall soon go home; not to the chateau of the Garonne, but to my home in heaven. I shall meet dear papa there, and we will wait, and watch for you and mamma, and we shall all be happy together with Jesus."

That night Henri had a very pleasant dream. In sleep he thought over what his brother had said, and he too dreamed of home. He thought that the iron bars which hurt his delicate limbs so much were all taken away, and that he lay on a soft, pleasant bank of violets, in the sunshine, the fresh air was breathing on his brow, and his mother was sitting beside him, singing a low sweet hymn, while birds were singing in chorus in the trees above them.

Then he waked, and shrank back painfully from the sharp bars, and in the dim, gray light, he saw Philippe sleeping, with his form distorted by the shape of his hateful cage.

Then the weary child fell asleep again; and now he dreamed that he saw his Saviour seated on a throne, surrounded by bright angels, and his father was standing with them, as bright as

they were; and the child seemed to hear the music of their harps, as they sung the praises of Him who had washed them from their sins in his own blood. Then Henri tried to rise up and go to them; but swift, deep waters bore him away, and he was sinking fast, when he cried out, "O my Saviour help me," and the Holy One stretched out his hand, and lifted the trembling little one from the tossing waters, and placed him once more in his father's arms.

"Oh happy, happy dream," cried Henri, as he wakened. "Oh that my Saviour would come and take me home." Come Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Quickly the sick child faded. One morning when the gaoler brought in his loaf, he found that he did not answer; a sweet smile rested on his pale lips; but Henri was free, Henri was in heaven.

Far happier was he than the powerful king who had condemned him. Louis trembled when he thought of death; he had long been cruel, and now he began to fear that he might be murdered by the relatives of some of those whom he had hung, like chestnuts, from the trees of his park. He shut himself up in a strong

castle, guarded by many soldiers; he set traps and pitfalls in the grass around, and sharp instruments to cut the feet of any who should approach the castle, except by one path. He wore chain armour under his clothes lest any should stab him; and refused to eat of any dish unless the cook first tasted it, lest any should poison him. He had six bed-rooms with iron locks on the doors, and he slept in a different room every night, lest an assassin should find him. He was a miserable man. The saints were his gods, and he always wore their small leaden images in his hat; he used often to take them down and pray to them. If he received what he prayed for, he knelt to thank the leaden images; but if he did not receive what he wished, he threw the images on the ground, and trampled on them.

There was one enemy that could not be barred out by the iron spikes round the castle. Sickness came in and confined him to his bed. He raved, he blasphemed, he offered the physicians half his kingdom if they would only keep away death; he swore that he would not die.

But his riches and his greatness passed away.

On the 30th of August, 1485, death came for him. There was not a tear shed for him.

In his royal castle he had been miserable; but Philippe in his prison, and in his iron cage, had found happiness. Left alone, he thought over Henri's words, over the lessons of his father and mother; he learned to pray, and in prayer found rest.

Soon after the new king, Charles, had removed to his new palace, a lady in deep mourning was announced. She was Philippe's mother. She pleaded for her son, and obtained his release.

Soon the gaoler brought him the glad news, and prepared him to meet the Duchess. His heart danced with joy, and overflowed in thanks and praises to the Almighty who had heard his prayers. He was then carried home, and his mother watched by him. It was new life to him to have his pale cheeks fanned by the fresh air. The old servants came out to meet their young master, and rejoicings filled the Chateau of the Garonne. After a short time, Philippe partly regained the use of his limbs, but he always remained a lame cripple.

However the crippled Duke became famed for

acts of charity; he lived happily to a good old age, and died in peace.

You will be glad to hear, my dear children, that many years after, the people of Paris burst open the prison doors, and broke all the cages of Louis XI. into small pieces. You would have gladly helped to destroy these cruel engines of torture, and I should have gladly looked on while you destroyed them. Yet one of these hateful cages was to Henri what the chariot of fire was to Elijah; from it he had ascended to heaven. And while we looked at it, we should perhaps reflect, that no one can be quite unhappy, even in sickness or in prison, if Jesus be there with him as his Saviour and his friend.

WHICH IS THE WAY TO HEAVEN?

A LADY and gentleman, who lived in India, had three little children, Henry, Mary, and Ellen.

India is a very hot country, and its climate is, in general, unfavourable to the health of the children of English parents; and for this reason, they are frequently sent to Great Britain to be brought up and educated. Many little ones have thus been deprived of the proper care and watchful love of their parents.

It was a sore trial to Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin, to be obliged to send their dear little Henry, and Mary, and Ellen to England; for they loved them very much, and shed many tears on parting with them.

The children were put into a large ship, under the care of a black woman, who had been their nurse: they sailed away upon the great ocean for

weeks and months, going farther and farther every day from their papa and mamma; till at last they came to a sea-port town in the West of England, where a kind relation, a sister of their mother's, had already arrived to receive them. She was very glad, indeed, to see them, and embraced them tenderly; she told them that they had been committed to her care by their parents, and that she hoped they would love her, and be obedient to her, and that she would try to make them as happy as she possibly could.

The little children were very glad to meet, in their aunt, so kind a friend; so, after they had parted with their black nurse, who returned immediately to India, they set out with their aunt, Mrs. Hope, for her residence in Hampshire.

You may suppose how glad they were to leave the confinement of a ship, with its small cabins and crowded company, tossing up and down on the great seas; to travel in an open carriage, upon a smooth road, in a beautiful country, where the fresh, bracing air, the lovely verdure of the fields, and the singing of the birds, gave them

a pleasant impression of the new country in which they were now to remain.

When Mrs. Hope had brought these little children home to her house, and they had spent a few days in her company, she was grieved to find, that, though their bodies had been well taken care of, their souls had been quite neglected; no money had been spared to give them nice food and fine clothes; but in India, they had been left chiefly in their nursery to the care of black servants, who were ignorant heathens, and who had taught them some of their own notions of religion.

Poor Mary, and Ellen, and Henry, knew nothing about their own hearts, or about the evil of sin; they had never heard of God in his true character of *love;* one who so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son to redeem it. Nor had they heard what that Blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ, had suffered, when he died on the cross for sinners; nor of the Third Person in the Holy Trinity, called in Scripture, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter; whose office is to cleanse the

heart from sin, and sanctify it and make it fit for heaven.

They had heard of Bramah, and Vishnoo, and Juggernaut, and other names of idols, falsely called gods by the Hindoos who are heathens; but of the true God, as revealed in the Bible, they knew nothing.

Now, this was a subject of great concern to Mrs. Hope; for she considered, that every other advantage which they had enjoyed was *nothing*, in comparison with the great importance of knowing the way whereby they should be saved from eternal misery. She knew the Scripture which says, "what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul."

Mrs. Hope had, in consequence of these reflections, talked a little to her nieces and nephew, upon these subjects, concerning which, she had discovered their ignorance; but without much success; when one day little Henry came running in to her, followed by his sisters, their faces all glowing with interest, and all three crying out,

"Oh! Aunt, dear Aunt, come, see the balloon, the balloon."

"Where?" said their Aunt, rising immediately from her work-table.

"You will see it in the garden, Aunt," was the quick reply, "but please make haste: we saw it rise a large, large ball from behind a house, some fields off, and it went up very fast into the air; it was getting smaller when we ran in to tell you; oh! make haste!"

Mrs. Hope instantly followed the children into the garden, and there beheld a very large balloon at a considerable distance above their heads.

"Oh! Aunt, do you see that," cried Mary, "and do you see the beautiful car hanging to it, shining with gold."

"And do you see the two men in it," exclaimed Henry; "they are waving flags."

"Oh! Aunt, Aunt, I'm afraid they will drop out and be killed," cried little Ellen, covering her face with her hands.

"Indeed it is sometimes a dangerous experiment," replied her aunt; "some persons have

been killed in the descent of a balloon, though others have escaped."

"What do they go up for, Aunt?"

"I suppose it is to get to heaven," said Henry; "see, see, the balloon is getting smaller and smaller; we cannot perceive the sparkle of the gold now, nor the colour of the silk; Oh! how high it is; now it is entering a cloud, Oh! Aunt, it must surely be close to heaven! How I should like to go up to heaven in a balloon; it would be such an easy way."

"So should I," "and I," re-echoed his sisters.

"Dear children, why do you wish to go to heaven?" asked their aunt.

"Because it is a beautiful and a happy place: you told us so yesterday, Aunt," replied Mary.

"But did I not tell you that it is a holy place, also?"

"I think you did, Aunt: but there, see now! Brother, Sister, look! the balloon is just gone; it is so high we can only see a black speck; I suppose it is just in heaven *now*, Aunt!"

"No! my love that is not the way to travel

there; there are great mistakes made on this point, and many ways proposed, by different people, of arriving at that happy place, which fall as far short of the real truth, as your idea of going up there in a balloon."

"And how do you know the real, *true* way, Aunt?"

"I learn it from the Bible, my dear child, that blessed book which I showed you yesterday; it contains an account of the dealings of God with men, and teaches them the means by which they may be saved."

"I suppose, Aunt," said little Ellen, "if we could get bibles enough to build a *very* high ladder, we might get up to heaven *that way*."

Mrs. Hope, smiled; "no, my love, that is not the way we are to make use of the Bible in order to get to heaven; but, now, as we are talking on the subject, I should like to hear from each of you, what you think or know of the world above. You have each a soul, that is to live for ever; you have also each a body, that is to last only for a little while: it may be destroyed by sick-

ness or accident; but if it should escape these, it will become old and wear out, and then the soul can no longer dwell in it: what is to become of the soul after that, is, therefore, a very solemn question."

The children looked grave at this remark. Mary, who was the eldest, took her aunt's hand who was walking round the garden, and the two younger ones pressed up close to her on the other side, looking eagerly up to her face.

"Aunt," said Mary, "I remember seeing in India, a strange kind of men; they used to leave off working for their bread, to live by begging: and their hands and feet were tied up till they became quite useless to them, that they might obtain our pity; and sometimes their flesh was burned with hot irons, and made very sore. They let their hair, and their beard, and their nails grow, till they looked quite frightful, and they scarcely ate anything. Our nurse told us that they were holy men, who were preparing for eternal happiness, and who would, no doubt, be

immediately taken up to happiness whenever they died."

"Yes, Mary," replied her aunt, "I have heard of these men; they are called *Faquirs;* but their notions of religion are taken from very false and wicked forms of worship which prevail among the Hindoos. They worship they know not what, deformed idols made with hands,* which can neither see, nor hear, nor feel, to whom they attribute human passions and crimes of the worst description. They know nothing of the true God, because they know nothing of his Son, Jesus Christ, by whom alone, as the Bible shows, we can have access to him. Their gods are of their own invention; and their heaven, and their holiness are all their own inventions; they mortify

* "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."—Psalm cxv. 4-8.

and torment the body; but in what way does this benefit the soul?"

"Indeed, Aunt, I don't know," said Mary, "for those *Faquirs*, though they set up for holy men, were, I heard, very wicked; even nurse said, they were proud of being able to bear so much torture, and despised other people who could not do, or suffer the same things; they were also fond of being praised and talked about."

"This shews that their religion was false. True religion humbles the heart, and teaches man the wickedness which is really *within* it. In fact, it teaches TRUTH: and as soon as ever a man is enabled, by the grace of God, to compare his own state with the account given in Scripture of what the heart of man is, then he instantly feels, *this* must be from God, for he only who made man, can tell what is in man.

"Now, the Bible teaches us that no man can make himself righteous; but the Faquir says, '*I* will make myself righteous;' and he tries to do so according to his own notions. But, after all, what does he effect by all his self-torments?

He becomes more proud, selfish, and overbearing than he was before; not one evil passion is subdued; not one change is wrought in his character."

"Then what should he do, Aunt?"

"My child, the Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots."

"To be sure, he cannot, Aunt; and I suppose that it is just as hard for poor Faquirs to change their hearts. How I pity them! I wonder what could be done for these poor Faquirs."

"Just the same for *them*, my child, as for *you*, and for *me*, and for *every one* of the human race. We are all of us born in sin; we go astray *from our birth;* we are without power to do any thing right of ourselves, and are under a sentence of eternal condemnation, if we die with our sins unpardoned, and our hearts unchanged; but God, our OWN TRUE God, has not left us in this dreadful condition without a remedy. He sent into the world his only Son, the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, to take our nature upon him, and in the humble form of a man, to fulfil in our stead, all the commands of

God; shedding his precious blood upon the cross, to purchase pardon for us. I told you the story of his sufferings before; but I am now speaking more particularly of the purpose for which he suffered.

"Jesus, the Son of God, became a little child, just such as you are, only without sin; and when he grew up, though he spent his life doing good, and teaching people how they might be saved, by coming to him, and believing on him, yet at last the Jews took him, and crowned him with thorns, and crucified him. He was then laid in the grave, but after three days, as He had himself foretold, he rose up out of it, and appeared to his disciples, and comforted, and instructed them for forty days longer. He then ascended up into heaven before their eyes, and the clouds received him out of their sight. And we are further told that 'He ever liveth to make intercession for us' —'He is exalted to God's right hand, a Prince and a Saviour,' that he may plead for sinners like ourselves, and give us repentance and remission of our sins."

"I wish the poor Faquirs, could hear of this Blessed Saviour," said Mary, "I am sure that they would be very glad."

"Some of them have heard of him," replied her aunt, "good men have gone to India, as teachers, for the very purpose of carrying to the poor ignorant Hindoos and Mahommedans this good news, that God has provided a ransom for their souls. Those who are enabled to believe in Christ, are made very glad and very happy indeed.

"I have heard of one poor Faquir, named Anund, whose heart the Lord had changed, and who had given up all his foolish, vain, and wicked ways to follow the blessed Jesus. He was, one day, with two or three Christians, who had likewise been Faquirs, listening to the conversation and instructions of some of those excellent teachers, whom I have mentioned. Among other subjects, the habits and customs of the sect to which they had formerly belonged, were talked of, and some anecdotes related.

"The Hindoo Christians were asked, what

they now thought of these things? They sat silent; their eyes cast down, and sighing heavily. At length Anund turned to one whose name was Matthew, and, passing his arm round his neck, exclaimed with the most touching expression of affection, as well as of gratitude to God, 'Ah, my Brother, my Brother, such devils once were we! But now!' and he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and raised himself up—'Jesus! Jesus! my God! my Saviour.' It was very affecting to those who heard him."

"I am glad that those poor men were made so happy," said Mary; and she paused for a moment—"Oh Aunt, let me gather that beautiful rose for you; the stalk is covered with green moss, and is sparkling with dew, and how sweet it smells." Saying these words, she gathered a small branch, with several crimson buds, just peeping through their green covering, and one very beautiful flower, nearly full blown.

Mrs. Hope received it with pleasure, and said, "why do you not keep it yourself my love, when you admire it so much?"

The little girl smiled, and looking up affectionately in her face, replied, "That's the way the natives do in India, Aunt, when they want to show respect or love; and I want to show you that I love you very much; I would rather you had it."

"Thank you, my dear child; you have just put me in mind of a pretty little story which I heard of one of the poor Hindoos, who had been a beggar, and a blind devotee to the heathen gods. He had been listening to a Missionary preaching about our Lord Jesus Christ; and, in the evening of the same day, he came to him and said, 'I have a flower (meaning his heart) which I wish to give to some one who is worthy of it. I have for many years travelled about the country to find such a one, but in vain; I have been to Juggernaut, but there I saw only a piece of wood. THAT was not worthy of it. But to day I have found one that is, and He shall have it: Jesus Christ is worthy of my flower.'"

"Oh! Aunt that is a pretty story," cried all

the children. "I would like to give Jesus Christ *my* flower, said Mary.

"And so would I," said Henry.

"And I too," cried little Ellen.

"Then do so, my beloved children."

"But how are we to do it, Aunt?"

"Tell me first," she replied, "how did you, Mary, bring this pretty rose to me."

"I just gathered it, Aunt, and put it into your hand, and you took it."

"Were you afraid that I would refuse to take it, Mary?"

"No; because I knew that you loved me. You have showed us so much kindness; I had no fear of displeasing you in offering my flower."

"Well, my child, with the very same confidence you may offer your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. You may be more sure of *his* love, than you are of *mine*, because he has given the strongest of all proofs of it, in laying down his life for you. Give him your heart and he will accept of it; unworthy as it is: he will renew it and make it

holy. And you will find him to be the way to heaven."

"But, dear Aunt, I can *see* you and speak to you, but where am I to find him?"

"You must believe on him, my love, though you cannot see him. This is called faith, and without faith we cannot be saved. Before you came to England, had you ever heard of me?"

"Oh yes, papa and mamma told us that we had a dear kind aunt in England, who loved us, and to whom we were to go, some time or other."

"And did you doubt it?"

"No, surely, Aunt, we were as certain of it as if we had seen you, and we fully expected to receive kindness from you."

"Then, dear children, that was faith in your parents' word; you believed that there was such a place as England before you saw it, and you were not deceived. You now also believe that there is such a place as America or Africa. You believe that there are people in the world, of habits very different from our own: you believe that there are strange birds and beasts in exist-

ence, which live in remote parts of the world, where you are never likely to be; yet you never doubt the accounts, though you cannot actually prove the truth of them by your own experience. Now you are called on to believe in Jesus the Lord, with the same simple trust in the evidences you have of what he has done, and suffered for you, that you have in the truth of other circumstances which rest on testimony, that you believe."

"And will this save us, dear Aunt?"

"This is the first step, my dear children, for 'he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,' Heb. xi. 6; but there is something more in saving faith. The power that draws our unholy hearts to God must come from above, for it has to overcome our natural reluctance to love him, and obey him. This is the office of the Holy Spirit, whose powerful and gracious influence changes the heart of man, and brings it into union with Christ. The *mere knowledge* that He suffered for us, would no more save us, than the mere knowledge that there is

such an orb as the sun, would warm and enlighten us."

"And how are we to get that faith that will draw us to God, dear Aunt?" asked Mary.

"You must seek for it earnestly by prayer, my child. You must ask for it, not as if you were indifferent about it, but as if you felt your need of it. You must ask for it in the name of your Saviour, for he has said, 'no man cometh to the Father but by me.' While he has also added the gracious words of encouragement, 'him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.' And if you thus seek, you will surely find him to be indeed the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*. These little crimson buds of the rose resemble you in your infant state of knowledge and faith. Had they been left on the tree, they would have required sunshine and shelter, and care, and moisture, to make them expand into full bloom, and scent the air with their fragrance. Just such is the heart of a Christian, under the teaching of the Spirit of God. And so must you, my beloved children, seek continually his blessed influences,

that you may be strengthened, and increase, and grow up into an acquaintance with Christ your Saviour, till you are fitted to dwell with him in the kingdom of God for ever."